

Dr. Khalifa Abdul Hakim

The  
Metaphysics of Rumi

A  
CRITICAL  
AND  
HISTORICAL  
SKETCH



THE INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC CULTURE



# The Metaphysics of Rumi

A CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL SKETCH

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## FOREWORD

**R**UMI had been the ideal of a sober mystic poet to the Muslims for centuries and his Mathnavī had been a constant subject of deeper study by people of all ages. The real reason why it has been a continuous source of inspiration to people of diverse tastes is that it approaches the basic problems of religion from the psychological point of view. Rūmī's attitude is not of a scholar or an analytical intellect who dissects Reality and presents it piecemeal; he enters into the very heart of Reality, feels the throbs of its heart-beat and communicates the living experience through which he passes. His sympathetic and intuitive approach is what distinguishes him from the purely philosophical thinkers. But, in spite of his basic mystic approach to Reality and in spite of the fact that he sometimes denounces Reason in favour of Intuition, his Mathnavī is not the product of pure and unalloyed mysticism. In it we find the cultural tradition of Muslims in all its manifold aspects. We meet here the flower of Hellenistic thought, as influenced and moulded by the pre-Greek thought-currents of Babylonia and Egypt, of Judaism and Zoroastrianism. The scholastic philosophy of Philo, the illuminative mysticism of Plotinus and his followers, the Hellenistic interpretation of Christianity, the mystic experiences of a host of Christian and Gnostic hermits are all found here beautifully woven into the texture of a system of thought which is from beginning to end purely Islamic.



Islam succeeded to the cultural tradition of antiquity and assimilated all the healthy elements of what mankind had so far achieved in the field of human thought. In the same spirit, Rūmī's great Mathnavī reflects the ideal of cultural unity of mankind. But the greatest merit of Rūmī in the eyes of a twentieth-century man lies, not merely in this cultural synthesis that he has been able to achieve, but in the peculiar modern interpretation of Islam that one finds in his celebrated Mathnavī.

In fact, the modern trends towards Voluntarism and Spiritual Pluralism that arose in Europe in post-Kantian period and are connected with the names of Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Bergson, Lloyd Morgan, William James and James Ward form the characteristic features of Rūmī's thought. His appeal to psychological and personal experience in solving the religious problems of Godhead, resurrection, freedom of will and human ego; his advocacy of Activism and Voluntarism; his effort to uphold the individuality and separate identity of the finite self, and yet in deep and intimate relationship with the Ultimate Ego, that together form a spiritual kingdom of free self-determined individuals; his emphasis on intuition and 'love' as opposed to barren Intellectualism; his theory of emergent evolution and creative development—are all different lines of thought that converge in the supreme *weltanschauung* of Rūmī and, like pearls, are strung together in a single rosary.

Originally submitted as a doctorate thesis at the Heidelberg University (Germany) in 1925 for D. Phil. degree, *The Metaphysics of Rūmī* is an excellent attempt at explaining this basic thought of Rūmī in the context of the cultural achievements of Muslim philosophers, mystics and scholastics. It was first published in 1933 and up to date is the only book in English on the subject.

The first edition and the second impression of the



work contained references to some lithographed edition of the Mathnavī and in most cases English translation of the quoted verses was missing. Similarly, many mistakes were detected in the quotation of the Qur'ānic verses. As desired by the late Dr. Khalīfa 'Abdul Hakīm, I undertook to change the references to some standard edition of the Mathnavī. Nicholson's excellent edition of the Mathnavī along with its English translation was the only possible choice. The work proved very toilsome and, after a labour of several months, the majority of references were found and compiled. There were many variants in the text and in each case the one preferred by Nicholson was retained. Similarly, in the matter of translation, in most cases Nicholson's was followed.

The work of checking references of the Qur'ānic verses and their translation was undertaken by Mr. Muhammad Ashraf Darr, Institute's Secretary. He is also responsible for its proof-reading and especially for giving the book the graceful form that it possesses. But for him, it would not have been possible to achieve this result.

BASHIR AHMAD DAR

20 March 1959



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## INTRODUCTION

**R**ŪMĪ [604-672/1207-1273] belongs to a period in which the Islamic religious and philosophical life had nearly exhausted itself in all directions. All the problems arising out of religious and philosophical interests had been put and answered in various ways before him by theologians, philosophers and mystics of Islam. Shortly before Rūmī, the interpretation and development of Greek philosophy in Islam had reached its highest point in Averroes (Ibn Rushd) [520-595/1126-1198] and Islamic theology had reached its perfection of system in Ghazālī [505/1111]. Mystic thought and life too had undergone a long and sustained development from Abū al-Hāshim<sup>1</sup> [d. 150/767] of Syria, the first ascetic in Islam to whom the word Sūfī was applied, down to Shaykh Moḥīyyuddīn ibn al-‘Arabī who was a contemporary of Rūmī and to Sanā’ī [d. 525/1130] and Farīduddīn ‘Aṭṭār on the side of Persian mystic poetry. So we see that Rūmī coming at the end of all this development of philosophical thought and religious experience holds the unique

1. See ‘Abdur Raḥmān Jāmī : *Nafḥāt al-Ans* (Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow), p. 31 :

ابو هاشم الصوفی قدس الله سره شیخ بوده بشام و در اصل کوفی است و با سفیان ثوری معاصر بوده - سفیان ثوری گوید : لولا ابو هاشم الصوفی ما عرفت دقائق الرياء ..... "اول کسی که وے را صوفی خواندند وے بود" -



position of being an heir to an immense intellectual and spiritual wealth. When we consider that Islam itself was not an absolutely original product in the sense that it brought any view of God and man that never existed before it, and that it was, according to its own assertion, a continuation and revival of the Creed of Abraham and Moses and Jesus, and we add to it the theoretical influence of Greek philosophy and Christian religious life on the one hand and the Persian and Indian influences on the other, then we can understand to some extent the variety and wealth of thought and experience that we meet in Rūmī. His Mathnavī is a crystal of many facets in which we see reflected the broken lights of Semitic monotheism, Greek intellectualism with Pythagorean elements and Eleatic theories of Being and Becoming, Plato's theory of Ideas and Aristotle's theory of Causation and Development, the "One" of Plotinus and the ecstasy that unites with the "One," the controversial questions of *Mutakallamūn*, the epistemological "erkenntnistheoretisch" problems of Ibn Sīna and Al-Farābī, Ghazālī's theory of prophetic consciousness and Ibn al-'Arabī's Monism. With all this wealth of thought, the Mathnavī of Rūmī is neither a system of philosophy, nor of theology nor of mysticism, nor is it pure eclecticism. If we call him Ṣūfī, that cannot give any definite idea about him because Ṣūfism is neither a separate religion nor any one system of thought. Every one of the great Ṣūfīs has had a peculiar *weltanschauung*, a fact that has been clearly recognised by Nicholson, the greatest European scholar in this field. The study of Rūmī is interesting not because he is the greatest mystic poet of Islam but because of the fact that in him we find a man who has left no problem of philosophical and religious life untouched. In him we find not the creation of problems but the rethinking in the light of personal experience of all that had gone before him. So in one way *the study of Rūmī is the study of the*



*best achievements of philosophical and religious life in Islam.*

But the great difficulty in the study of Rūmī results from his manner of exposition. In his Mathnavī the threads of various motives cross one another and are interwoven into such a confused fabric that one requires a good deal of patience to follow him. On the feeble thread of an insignificant story he strings the beads of his ideas and feelings without any system. A few didactic lines followed suddenly by outbursts of ecstasies, turning back to the story and sometimes only at the suggestion of a word in the last line a sudden diving into a metaphysical problem—that is Rūmī's way of proceeding with his Mathnavī. So the first laborious work of one who undertakes to scan Rūmī's world of thought, in order to understand and criticise him, is to gather all the promiscuously scattered pearls and then to string them on the threads of different problems. Out of the numerous commentaries of the Mathnavī, some are supposed to have made attempts in this direction, but unfortunately they have not been available to me.<sup>1</sup>

Writing systematically on all the problems dealt with by Rūmī would require an immense work in many volumes and would be really equal to writing a whole history of philosophy and theology and mysticism in Islam. So, for the purposes of the present investigation, we take the most important and central problem in his world of thought : the problem of Personality, divine and human. But this problem branches off into various fundamental problems of philosophy like the nature of the soul, the freedom of the will, im-

1. Besides this, one cannot overlook another difficulty in grasping the views of Rūmī. Among the *dramatis personae* of his stories sometimes given as controversial dialogues each character speaks for himself. Are we justified to identify the author with any one of them? This difficulty would be insurmountable but for the fact that the author is not impartial—he takes sides and becomes so enthusiastic for one party that he pushes the person aside and begins to advocate his cause. That is surely a great defect from the point of view of art but it facilitates our understanding of the artist.



mortality and the relation of the human to the divine. Under these different headings we will try to summarise the central conceptions of Rūmī on these problems with short historical references to the origin of each problem and its development before Rūmī.

The fact about the individual differences among the Sūfīs and the various types of Sūfism was recognised very early. Among the old Persian writers Hujwayrī<sup>1</sup> makes an attempt to give us a classification of the Sūfī sects according to the doctrines held by them : "The Sūfīs are divided into twelve sects of which two are reprobated and ten are approved. Every one of these sects has an excellent system and doctrine as regards purgation (*mujāhidā*) and contemplation (*mukāshifā*). Although they differ from each other in their devotional practices and ascetic disciplines, they agree in the fundamentals and derivatives of the religious law and 'Unification.' Abū Yazīd said, 'The disagreement of divines is a mercy except as regards the detachment of phenomenal attributes from the Unity of God ; and there is a famous tradition to the same effect.'<sup>2</sup> The real essence of Sūfism lies amidst the traditions (*akhbār*) of the Shaykhs and is divided only metaphorically and formally. Therefore I will briefly divide their sayings in explanation of Sūfism and unfold the main principle on which the doctrine of each is based, in order that the student may readily understand the matter."

This is Hujwayrī's introduction to his chapter on the Sūfī sects. He has not adopted any one logical basis of division and classification and therefore sometimes picks up a very unimportant characteristic, a difference of opinion about some psychological state or a verbal quarrel about terminology, to give a sect

1. Al-Hujwayrī : *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, p. 176. Nicholson's translation (Gibb Memorial Series), Luzac & Co., London 1911.

2. Abū Yazīd is referring here to the famous tradition : اختلاف امتی رحمة (Existence of differences among my Ummat is a blessing).



its distinctive feature. For instance, the Muḥāsibīs, the followers of Abū ‘Abdullāh Hārith b. Asad al-Muḥāsibī, hold as the peculiarity of their doctrine that satisfaction (*riḍā*) is not to be reckoned among the “stations” (*maqāmāt*) but to be included among the “states” (*aḥwāl*). In spite of these defects the *Kāshf al-Mahjūb* of Hujwayrī along with the *Risālah* of Qushayrī may be reckoned as scientific attempts at systematisation.

The *Tadhkirā* of ‘Aṭṭār,<sup>1</sup> affording valuable pieces of information, has no pretensions of accuracy or scientific exactitude. The ruling passion of the writer is the love of the abnormal and supernatural.

The Muslims themselves having accepted Sūfism as the deeper meaning of Islam ceased to make any critical study of it. Such diverse types as Uways Qarnī, Imām Shāfa‘ī, Hallāj, ‘Umar Khayyām and Hāfiz, to pick up at random only a few names from the different periods of Islamic history, ascetics, jurists, pantheists, agnostics and epicureans, were all uncritically labelled together as Sūfis. It is only in the West and in quite recent times that critical and historical study of the subject has begun. The first short, though extremely suggestive, attempt was made by Adelbert Merx<sup>2</sup> to study the subject in its chronological development. But the scholar who has thrown a flood of light on the whole subject by a patient, thorough and sympathetic study of it is R. A. Nicholson of Cambridge. No student of the subject in the West as well as in the East can afford to dispense with the fruits of his labours. In his *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* he has given us masterly sketches of Abū Sa‘īd ibn Abi’l Khayr, Jillī and Ibn al-Fāriḍ and some notes on the *Faṣūṣ al-Hikm* of Ibn al-‘Arabī besides an

1. *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā’* of ‘Aṭṭār in the original Persian edited by R. A. Nicholson (Luzac & Co., London 1907, Persian Historical Texts, 2 volumes).

2. Von Adelbert Merx: *Idee und Grundlissien einer allgemeine Geschichte der Mystik* (Heidelberg 1893).



admirable picture of the "Perfect Man" of Sūfism. But to realise how much is still to be done to have a thorough grasp of the subject, we have to see that out of the illustrious trinity of Sūfism, Ghazālī, 'Arabī and Rūmī, only the world of thought of Ghazālī has received an adequate attention. It is perhaps due to the fact that Ghazālī of all the three is the most lucid and systematic writer and his style stands nearest to the modern cold and critical way of exposition. Ibn al-'Arabī's<sup>1</sup> supernaturalism and obscurity of language make an understanding and evaluation of his world of thought extremely difficult. The Muslims themselves have always gazed at him only as a phenomenon to be wondered at and it has never been clearly understood in what relation his uncompromising Monism stands to the positive monotheistic religion of Islam which he professes with all the rigour of orthodoxy.

But so far as Rūmī is concerned it is only his manner of exposition which is responsible for the fact that he has not been thoroughly understood. His collection of odes, though punctuated here and there with highly suggestive and pregnant verses, is, on the whole, a product of ecstatic effervescence and lyrical fervour. In so far as lyrical poetry is a better vehicle of mystic feeling than prose or versified philosophy, the *Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīz*<sup>2</sup> is perhaps a truer mirror of his mind. But if we desire to study his attitude towards the great problems of life and reli-

1. Professor Nicholson has paved the way for the understanding of 'Arabī by the translation of *Tarjamān al-Ashwāq* with 'Arabī's own Commentaries (Oriental Translation Fund N. S. Vol. XX, London 1911). Besides this his notes on *Fasūs al-Hikm* are extremely valuable in this respect. (R. A. Nicholson : *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*.)

2. The notes by Nicholson on some of the odes translated by him are very copious and thorough. At the end of the book he has made a sketchy attempt to arrange certain verses of Rūmī under philosophical headings. Another equally sketchy attempt was made by the great Indian scholar Shiblī to classify the philosophical contents of the Mathnavī under the problems of the philosophy of religion. [See Nicholson : *Selected Poems from the Divan-i-Shams-i-Tabrīz* (Cambridge 1898), and Shiblī Nu'mānī : *Swānīḥ Maulvī Rūm* (Electric Press, Amritsar)].



gion, his odes would not lead us anywhere. For that purpose it is to his *Mathnavi* that we must turn. In the composing of that enormous work he had a didactic and pedagogic purpose: therein he wants to teach and justify the ways of God to man, showing us the path of self-realisation. But no reader of his can help feeling that he is an awfully boring teacher. His grains of truth are buried in heaps of chaff. But the very fact that the deepest minds have allowed themselves to be bored by him, with the hope of hearing a great truth from him at the end, is a proof of the fact that the alloy contains precious gold. In a comparison of Ghazālī with Rūmī, Nicholson has brought out the points of likeness and difference most admirably in *The Idea of Personality in Sūfism*<sup>1</sup>: “Jalāluddīn Rūmī holds that the intellect as opposed to love is of the Devil,<sup>2</sup> he scorns book-learning and traditional knowledge, and he must have condemned the scientific and philosophical method of Ghazālī as alien to the true spirit of Sūfism, while Ghazālī on his part would have viewed with great reprobation the ecstatic flights which carry Jalāluddīn Rūmī far above the realms of morality and law. To a certain extent the teaching of *Iḥyā* and *Mathnavi* is the same but the teachers are very different. Ghazālī is systematic, precise and lucid; Jalāluddīn allegorical, rambling, tedious, often obscure, yet Ghazālī can seldom compete with him in ardour and exaltation of feeling, in originality and profundity of thought, or in

1. R. A. Nicholson: *The Idea of Personality in Sūfism* (Cambridge University Press 1923), Lecture 3.

2. Reference is to the famous verse of Rūmī [IV, 1402]:

داند او کو نیکبخت و محرم است      زیرکی ز ابلیس و عشق از آدم است

“He that is blessed and familiar (with spiritual mysteries) knows that intelligence is of Iblīs, while love is of Adam.”

Iqbal in his *Payām-i-Mashriq* (The Message of the East) on the basis of this verse gives us an interesting dialogue between Goethe and Rūmī in Paradise. According to the poet, *Faust* and *Mathnavi* both exemplify the same theme.



*power, and freedom of expression."*

Further on, dealing with their views about God, Nicholson says that neither the theologian nor the poet is a pantheist. From Ghazālī we get the science and the doctrine, from Jalāluddīn the sentiment, faith and experience of personal religion. I am aware that, as regards Jalāluddīn, this judgment may appear questionable to those who have read certain passages in the *Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz* where he describes his oneness with God in terms which look pantheistic at first sight and which I myself understood in a pantheistic sense at a time when I knew less about the history of Sūfism than I now do. As we saw in case of Ibn al-Fāriḍ, the mystic who has attained to the unitive state can identify himself with the all-comprehending reality of God. Jalāluddīn, for example, says in one of his odes :

I am the theft of the rogues,  
I am the pain of the sick.  
I am both cloud and rain,  
I have rained in the meadows.

Now belief in such a Universal Being need not involve the pantheistic belief, that all things are God and God is all things. The Neoplatonists, with their doctrine of emanation, were theists, although the "One" of Plotinus is not a personal God and a similar position is reached in some types of mysticism which are not so much religious as philosophical. But the mysticism of Hallāj, Ghazālī, Ibn al-Fāriḍ and Jalāluddīn Rūmī, like that of all the early Sūfis, is predominantly religious. Take a few definitions : "Hatred of the world and love of the Lord" ; "Death to self and life in God" ; "To form one's self on the character of God." *The object of this feeling is not a being without personal attributes but a "personality so wide as to include in itself all existence and all action, all matter and all force. It is universally immanent and abso-*



*lutely transcendent, and it expresses itself most completely in Man, who is nothing except in so far as he realises his true nature to be the image of the Divine."*

"It is the religious life of the soul, its longing for union with God and its contemplation of HIM in moments of ecstasy that Jalāluddīn chiefly dwells on."

I have quoted this highly instructive passage at length because my dissertation is nothing but an attempt to prove the truth of these statements. I have discussed the problem of the divine and the human personality in Sūfism with special reference to Rūmī, the poet and mystic, who, in spite of all his ramblings and ecstasies, is profounder and deeper than Ghazālī, the theologian. Besides this it has been my purpose to bring out more clearly than it has yet been done the connection of every problem with the teaching of the Qur'ān. All sects in Islam are presumably based on the Qur'ān; hence no problem in the religious life of Islam can be adequately understood unless we study it from its very foundation upwards.

The Mathnavī of Rūmī is an unsystematic epitome of all the philosophical and theological thoughts developed in Islam since its advent down to the thirteenth century of the Christian era. At first sight Rūmī appears to be an eclectic through and through. He picks up what he considers to be true from every system and strings it on the slender thread of his tales. Intimate acquaintance with him, however, brings out into full relief the outlines of his own outlook on life and shows that there is a "method in his madness" which is in some ways more consistent and methodical than many systems of scholastic and intellectual metaphysics. It is with reference to certain central problems of the philosophy of religion that I will try to bring out the original conceptions of this deeply profound, though in his style a painfully unsystematic, writer.



## THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

### The Transcendental Self

**I**T HAS been rightly said by Nicholson that all creeds in Islam are based on the Qur'an and Sūfism in its various forms is no exception to it. Besides those verses that are clearly mystical in their contents there are others that have been given a deeply metaphysical and spiritual meaning by interpretation. Rūmī's thought has many sources, as already referred to, but he himself in his Mathnavī does not acknowledge any other source except the Qur'an and the Hadīth even if the structure of thought is evidently foreign. He never refers any of his ideas directly to any of the Greek thinkers or to any one of the philosophers of Islam that had preceded him. The name of Aristotle is never mentioned by him and the name of Plato is mentioned only once along with Galenus, not in connection with his philosophy but only as a metaphor when he calls love his Plato and Galenus.<sup>1</sup>

Otherwise when he is conscious of having derived a conception from some of the philosophers he refers to

۱. اے دوائے نخوت و ناموس ما اے تو افلاطون و جالینوس ما

"The remedy of our pride and vainglory, our Plato and our Galen!"  
(i, 24).

Once again in the Mathnavī he has directly referred to Greek philosophy opposing it to the philosophy of faith:



them generally as حکیمان گفته اند [the philosophers have said]. But in his treatment of the problems we shall be obliged to mention the references to the Qur'an and Hadith stated by him, and also trace the unmentioned origin of his conceptions.

Two words occur in the Qur'an : *khalq* [creation] and *amr* [command] with regard to the creative act of God : له الخلق و له الامر [to Him belong the creation and the command].<sup>1</sup> These words with a little freedom to fit the terminology of philosophy might be rendered as Nature and Will respectively which refer to the two realms, the Realm of Nature and the Realm of Spirit. The Prophet seems to have been questioned about the nature of the soul and the Qur'an asks him to reply in the following words :

يسئلونك عن الروح قل الروح من امر ربي

"They ask you about the soul ; say the soul is from the Command of my Lord" (xxii. 85).

This verse was supposed to be a clue to the nature of the soul as originating in the Realm of Command

تا بکے از حکمت یونانیان حکمت ایمانیان را ہم بخوان

"How long from the wisdom of the Greeks ; study the wisdom of the faithful."

The boldest attempt at mystical interpretation of the Qur'an is Ibn 'Arabī's commentary, for which see Ignez Goldziher, *Richtungen der Islamische Koran auslegung* (Leiden, 1920).

1. See the Qur'an, liv. 7. Rūmī has versified it :

پس له الخلق وله الامرش بدان خلق صورت امر جان را کب برآں

"Know, therefore, that (in the text) to Him belongs the creation and to Him the Command ; 'the creation' is the form and 'the Command' is the Spirit riding upon it" (vi, 78).

About the identification of امر 'روح' see نور محمدی 'مطالع' see

W. H. T. Gairdner, Introduction to the English translation of al-Ghazālī's *Mishkāt al-Anwār* (London, R.A. Society, 1924), where he quotes Nicholson and Massignon, and points out that the identification of *amr* and *rūh* was first taught by Hallāj.

See also 'Abdul Razzāq's *Dictionary of the Technical Terms of the Sūfis* edited by Dr. A. Sprenger (Calcutta, 1845).



which was interpreted as the Realm of Will or the Realm of Spirit as opposed to the Realm of Nature. This interpretation seems to have been generally accepted as correct, because nearly every philosopher and mystic of Islam refers to it as self-evident and draws from it corollaries about the metaphysical nature of the soul and even about the nature of God. Rūmī refers to it in numerous places :

بے جہت داں عالم امر اے صنم      بے جہت تر باشد امر لا جرم

“Know, O beloved, that the world of Command is without direction ; of necessity, the Commander is (even) more without direction” (iv, 3693).<sup>1</sup>

And then again in another place referring to the word *kun* [let there be],<sup>2</sup> the word of Command emanating from God whenever He wills to create anything out of nothing, Rūmī points to the indivisible and unitary nature of the Command in itself and its spreading out in space and time, the moment that it takes shape in the Realm of Nature, concluding therefrom the invisible and unitary nature of the soul. Long before Rūmī even the strict logician al-Fārābī (950/1543) had grounded his conception of the soul on the *khalq* and *amr* of the Qur’ān which were for him “Welt

1. The same thought is put in other words in the following couplet :

عالم خلق است باسوی و جهات      بے جہت داں عالم امر و صفات

“The world of creation is characterised by direction and space (but) know that the world of the (Divine) Command and Attributes is without (beyond) direction” (iv, 3692).

2. علت تنگی ست تر کیب و عدد      جانب تر کیب حسها مے کشد  
زاں سوئے حس عالم توحید داں      گریکے خواہی بدان جانب براں  
امر کن یک فعل بود و نون و کاف      در سخن افتاد و معنی بود صاف

“The cause of narrowness is composition (compoundness) and number (plurality) : the senses are moving towards composition.

“Know that the world of unification lies beyond sense : if you want Unity, march in that direction.

“The Divine Command *Kun* (Be) was a single act, and the (two letters) N and K occurred (only) in speech, while the (inward) meaning was pure (uncompounded)” (i, 3098-3100).



der Kreatur" and "Welt des Logos."<sup>1</sup> So we find that the philosophers as well as mystics of Islam considered themselves to be in possession of scriptural authority to raise the soul out of the Realm of Nature and free it from all its limitations, with the difference that the philosophers from al-Fārābī down to Ibn Rushd identified it with Logos or the Universal Intellect and the mystics true to their premises made it transcend even the Realm of Logos.

There can be no plurality in Reality ; all that is real is One and, therefore, the human souls even in their plurality are One. Plurality is a product of the categories of time and space which apply only to nature (*khalq*) and not to the Soul which is in the *amr*, the supersensuous Realm. This conception of the Unity of the Soul too is connected by Rūmī with the words of the Qur'ān where it is said that mankind has been created from 'One self' (*nafs wāḥidah*)<sup>2</sup> which could be translated as One Being or One Soul. Rūmī lays great stress on this Unity in the Ground and Essence of all souls without being afraid of the fact that a strictly logical consequence from these premises would necessarily result in not what is called Pantheism but in a strict Monism or Absolutism of the type of Indian Vedanta. However, he does not like to draw this consequence, and wherever he is surrounded by these logical contradictions he refers to a state of supersensuous experience where these logical contradictions are transcended and where the individual personality exists and does not exist at the same time.

From this Unity of the Spirit which, according to the nature of the case, he can only illustrate by analogies, like the Unity of Light in spite of the Variety and Plurality of Lamps, he sometimes draws

1. I. Goldziher, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie Die 'Kultur der Gegenwart'* (Berlin, 1923), unter Islamische und jurische philosophie.

2. ما خلقكم ولا (v. 99) وهو الذي انشاكم من نفس واحدة.  
بعثكم الا كنفس واحدة (v. 28).



very useful practical consequences. For instance, the implications of the words of the Qur'an : "We do not make a distinction between one prophet and the other," are developed in the following verses :<sup>1</sup>

|                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ده چراغ ار حاضر آید در مکان | هر یکے باشد بصورت غیر آن    |
| فرق نتوان کرد نور هر یکے    | چون بنورش روئے آری بے شکے   |
| اطلب المعنی من الفرقان و قل | لا نفرق بین احاد الرسل      |
| در معانی قسمت و اعداد نیست  | در معانی تجزیه و افراد نیست |
| منبسط بودیم و یک گوهر همه   | ے سر و بے پا بدیم آن سر همه |
| یک گهر بودیم هم چون آفتاب   | بگره بودیم و صافی هم چو آب  |
| چون بصورت آمد آن نور سره    | شد عدد چون سایه هائے کنگره  |
| کنگره ویران کنید از منجنیق  | تا رود فرق از میان این فریق |

"If you have in the house ten lamps, though everyone be different in form from the other, you cannot distinguish the light of the one from the other. Seek the meaning from the scripture and say 'We do not make distinction between the prophets.' In the meanings there is neither division nor number nor individuals. In the Realm of Spirit we all were *one* extended Substance without beginning and without end : *one* Substance like the Sun, clear and without knots like water" (i, 678-689, etc.).

He makes this conception as a basis for seeing the Universal Light of Truth in all religions and breathes that spirit of tolerance which pervades throughout the Mathnavi. In this respect Nicholson acknowledges the superiority of Rumi to Dante who, in his *Divine Comedy*, puts Muhammad and his companions in hell. Says Nicholson, "Rumi died a few years after the birth of Dante, but the Christian poet falls far below the level of charity and tolerance reached by his Muslim contemporary."<sup>2</sup>

Quite close to this conception of the Unity of Reality and Truth lies the thought of the eternal nature of the Soul. That which is real is true and

1. See I. Goldziher, *Neuplatonische und gnostische Elemente in Hadis* (Zeitschrift für assyriologie), p. 317, where he points out that the thought of the identity of the prophets was present in Christian Gnosticism.

2. R. A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London, 1914), p. 100.



One and that which is true and One is necessarily eternal. There cannot be two Absolutes<sup>1</sup> and the Absolute cannot be created ; hence the soul in its real essence is eternal. This strictly logical consequence of the Greek conception of Logos, this uncreated One of Plotin and the Indian Vedanta could not have been identified with the human soul according to the Cosmology and Anthropology of the Qur'ān. There are many verses in the Qur'ān on which the mystic conception of God could be based, but for the uncreated nature of the human soul there is hardly any scriptural basis. According to the Qur'ān, man is a sublime Creation to whom even the angels were asked to pay homage, but still he is a creature, neither identical nor co-eternal with God. But nevertheless the Sūfīs knew how to derive it out of the scripture by their method of interpretation. That the angels should bow to Adam was considered to be a proof of the divine nature of man ; and then "into the form of Adam created out of Clay, He breathed His Spirit,"<sup>2</sup> was supposed to prove that the spirit breathed into Adam, which is the soul of man, is the Spirit of God and hence uncreated and eternal.

After this identification of the divine and the human spirits, it became self-evident for the Sūfīs to deny the fact of creation altogether so far as the soul is concerned, and with the denial of creation, the denial of God as a Creator went hand in hand. In one of the lyrics of Rūmī we find this utterance in a sharp and unambiguous manner :

مے گفت در بیابان رند دهن دریده صوفی خدا نه دارد او نیست آفریده

"An outspoken fellow was saying in the desert : A Sūfī has no God, he is not created."

1. The chapter on قدیمان لا یکونان "There cannot be two Eternal Beings"—*Kitab al-Tawasin par Al Hallaj* edited by L. Massignon (Paris, 1913).

2. (xv. 29) فاذا سویتہ و نفخت فیہ من روحی فقووالہ ساجدین



The Mathnavī is full of such utterances. Having used the word "created" for man he at once corrects himself and says : *زاده گفتیم و حقیقت زاد نیست* [We said "created," but Reality or Truth is not created]. Talking of the saints he says : *جان باقی شان نروئید و نژاد* [Their everlasting soul neither grew nor was created]. Besides these there are innumerable lines in the Mathnavī which try to elucidate the same conception.

There is absolutely no doubt that this conception, though not quite identical with Greek thought, is yet a product of it. In Greek philosophy it was not the soul but the nature of Logos that was the nucleus of its metaphysical problems. It was the Semitic tradition, deepening through Christianity and passing to Islam, that had attached special value to the individual human soul. In the first two centuries of Islam, untouched by Greek thought, the attention of the best spirits of Islam turned more to fear of God and to moralising than to philosophising. It was only with the spreading of Greek conceptions that the problems of the finite and the infinite and of *qadīm* (eternal) and *ḥādīth* (contingent) arose and the God of Monotheism began to give place to the conception of *wajūd* and *wājib al-wajūd* (Existence and Necessary Existence). These questions about the Created and Uncreated having once arisen gave rise to controversies which sometimes ended in mutual persecutions and bloodshed, like the problem about the Qur'ān "the word of God," whether it was created or was co-eternal with God Himself. And similar was the case about the world in general. The philosophy of Aristotle was supposed to teach the eternity of the world and nearly every great interpreter of Islam from al-Kindī down to Ibn Rushd struggled with this problem either rejecting it as irreconcilable with the scripture or boldly upholding it like al-Fārābī. Philosophy in Islam ended in Ibn Rushd with the "Eternity and Unity of the Intellect"



(Monopsychismus), identifying it with God or the Universal Spirit, and mysticism likewise transcending "the Universal Intellect" of the philosophers ended in believing the soul as one and uncreated. Starting with these premises logically and consequently, the individual personality of a human soul could not be saved, and Ghazālī rightly saw that Logic necessarily leads to Monism and Pantheism and, therefore, refused to discuss the problem logically.<sup>1</sup> Rūmī too is quite clear about the difficulty of the problem and, therefore, refusing the verdict of logic, invites the readers to the certainty of a supersensuous experience. Rūmī's criticism of logic and the whole structure of his epistemology is motivated by a desire to rid this problem of contradictions. He says that the questions of the One and the Many and of immanence and transcendence are all born out of the category of space which is the mother of plurality; for the essence of Being, plurality and numbers do not exist. It is the animal side of human existence which creates plurality and distinctions; the essence of the human souls is one. Again, speaking about those who have realised the truth of their existence and referring to the verse of the Qur'ān: <sup>2</sup>هو الذى انشاكم من نفس واحدة (vi. 99) [God is He Who brought you forth from one soul] and the Ḥadīth رش عليهم نوره [He sprinkled His light upon them], he says :

چون از ایشان مجتمع بینی دو یار      هم یکے باشد و هم شش صد هزار  
بر مثال موجها اعداد شان      در عدد آورده باشد بادشان  
مفترق شد آفتاب جانها      در درون وزن ابدانها

1. It is characteristic of Ghazālī in his famous work *The Revival of Religious Sciences* (احیاء علوم الدین) that he tantalises the reader to the verge of these problems and then says that it is not allowed to discuss them.

2. Another verse too has a similar content (xxxi. 28) :

ما خلقکم و لا بعثکم الا کنفس واحدة



تفرقه در روح حیوانی بود      نفس واحد روح انسانی بود  
چونک حق رش علیهم نوره      مفترق هرگز نگردد نور او

"When from among them you see two friends, they are *one* and six hundred thousand at the same time. Their multiplicity is like that of the waves caused by the wind. The sun of the soul has been split up in the window of the bodies. Differences are found only in the animal soul : the human soul is only *one*. God said He sprinkled His Light upon them, and the Divine Light cannot be broken up" (ii, 184-189).

Then again he refers to the category of space being only phenomenal :

تو مکانی اصل تو در لا مکان      این دکان بر بند و بکشا آن دکان  
این جهان از بے جهت پیدا شد است      که ز بے جایی جهان را جا شد است

"You are in space but your essence is in the Spaceless Realm, close your business here and open it there. This world (of space) has come into existence out of the Spaceless, and out of Placelessness it has secured a place" (ii, 687).

Like the category of space, the category of time too does not belong to the essence of the soul :

فکرت از ماضی و مستقبل بود      چون ازین دو رست مشکل حل شود

"Thy thought is about the past and the future ; when it gets rid of these two, the difficulty will be solved" (ii, 177)

and again :

لا مکانی که درو نور خدا ست      ماضی و مستقبل و حال از کجا ست  
ماضی و مستقبلش نسبت به تو ست      هر دو یک چیزند و پنداری که دو ست

"In the spaceless realm of the Light of God, the past, present and the future do not exist. Past and future are two things only in relation to you ; in reality they are one" (iii, 1151-1152).

Again in a description of a moment of intuition we find the following interesting lines which show not only that the essence of the soul belongs to a timeless realm but that the category of time along with that of space is the cause of causation and change and the



source of all "hows and whys" of problems which cannot apply to the Noumenal realm to which the soul really belongs :

|                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| چون مراقب گشتم و از خود جدا   | ساعتی با آن گروه مجتبی       |
| زانکه ساعت پیر گرداند جوان    | هم در آن ساعت ز ساعت رست جان |
| رست از تلویں که از ساعت برست  | جمله تلویںها ز ساعت خاستست   |
| 'چون' نماند محرم 'بے چون' شوی | چون ز ساعت ساعتی بیرون شوی   |
| زانکش آن سو جز تحیر راه نیست  | ساعت از بے ساعتی آگاه نیست   |

"At the time when in the company of that selected group I began to meditate, stepping out of myself the soul got rid of all time that turns youth into age. All changes arise out of time; he who gets rid of time gets rid of change. Time does not know the nature of timelessness because only wonder can lead to it" (iii, 2072-2076).

Now the question arises : When none of these categories according to which we judge or define or limit a concept applies to the ground of the soul, what is that which can at all be said about it? Mysticism has nothing but silence to offer and even critical philosophy in its classical formulation of the problem by Kant had to stop at a "Ding an sich" about which no positive assertion could be made. Philosophy and mysticism at their highest pass into one another and coincide, though they follow different roads. Thought starts with the distinction of substance and attribute on the one side and subject and object on the other. We find Rūmī following both these roads to arrive at the conception of the pure Ego. He repeats the classical definition of the substance and the attribute : Substance is that which exists by itself and attribute is that which exists only in relation to a substance.<sup>1</sup>

جوهر آن باشد که باخود قائم است و آن عرض باشد که فرع او شد است ۱.

In another place he identifies substance with the noumenal self of man and conceives of the heavens as its attributes :

جوهر است انسان و چرخ او را عرض

"Man is substance and the sky is his attribute."



Rūmī concludes from this that only the soul is the substance<sup>1</sup> and all the phenomenal world is a collection of its attributes. But the phenomenal world consists of physical and psychical phenomena. To get to the pure ego, the first step of abstraction is from the physical universe outside of us, and the second step is the abstraction from the objective aspect of the psychical life itself. The pure ego cannot be identified with any objective aspect of it. The materialist identifies himself with matter and its phenomena, and philosophy in general has the tendency of identifying the soul with intellectual knowledge or Logos. This process of abstraction seems to be a common factor in all the great systems of philosophical mysticism. Shankaracharya in his system of Vedanta and Plotin in his attempt to reach the indefinable 'One' follow exactly the same line of abstraction. The following lines from the Mathnavī may be taken as typical illustrations of Rūmī's negative conception of the divine Ego :

گر تو هم می کند او عشق ذات      ذات نبود و هم اسماء و صفات  
و هم زائیده ز اوصاف وحدت      حق نژائید است اولم یولد است

"If he conceives that he is in love with the Essence (of God), conception of the (Divine) names and attributes is not the Essence.  
"Conception is begotten of qualities and definition : God is not begotten, He is *lam yulad*" (i, 2757-2758)

and referring to the error of man in identifying himself with the non-ego or any one objective aspect of his life, he says :

اے تو در بیگانه خود را باخته      دیگران را تو ز خود نشناخته  
تو بھر صورت کہ آئی بایستی      کہ منم این واللہ آن تو نیستی

"O thou who hast lost thyself in non-self (other than thyself), thou

پس بود دل جوهر و عالم عرض      سایہ دل چون بود دل را عرض ۱.

"Hence the heart is the substance, and the world is the accident :  
how should the heart's shadow (reflexion) be the object of the heart's desire ?" (iii, 2266).



hast not distinguished the others from thyself. Thou stoppest at every form that thou assumest and sayest 'That am I'; by God, thou art not that."

This thought which we find over and over again repeated and emphasised by Rūmī has such a striking similarity of meaning and expression with the Indian system of Vedānta that it may not be amiss to quote a few lines from Shankara's introduction to his commentary on the Vedānta :<sup>1</sup>

"Steht es nun fest, dass das Sein des Einen in dem Andern nicht zutrifft, so folgt umsomehr, dass auch die Qualitäten des Einen bei dem andern nicht stattfinden. Hieraus ergibt sich, dass die Uebertagung des als seinen Bereich die Vorstellung des Du habenden Objekts und seiner Qualitäten auf des als seinen Bereich die Vorstellung des Ich habende rein geistige Subjekt, und umgekehrt, dass die Uebertragung des Subjekts und seiner Qualitäten auf das Objekt folgerichtigerweise falsch ist,—und doch ist dem Menschen dieses, auf falscher Erkenntnis beruhende Wahres und Unwahres (d. h. Subjektives und Objectives) paaren Verfahren angeboren, dass sie die Wesenheit und Qualitäten des einen auf das andere übertragen ; Objekt und Subjekt, obgleich sie absolute verschieden sind, nicht von einander unterscheiden und so z. b. sagen : 'das bin ich,' 'das ist mein.'

"Wie daher jemand, wenn es seinem Sohne, einer Gattin und dgl. schlecht oder gut geht, zu sagen pflegt : 'Es geht bei mir schlecht oder gut,' und damit Qualitäten von Aussendungen auf das Selbst (die Seele, Atman) überträgt, ebenso auch überträgt er Qualitäten des Leibes, wenn er sagt.' Ich bin fett, ich bin mager, ich bin weiss, ich stehe, gehe, springe —und ebenso die Qualitäten des Innenorgans, Verlangen, Wunsch, Zweifel, Entschluss U.S.W."

1. Paul Deussen, *Das system des Vedānta*, vierte ant. pp. 49, 55, 57 (Leipzig, 1923).



In connection with these fundamental conceptions of Vedanta, Deussen makes certain observations comparing it with the *Critique* of Kant, which throws a sidelight on Rūmī's structure of thought and its special merits. Says Deussen, "Eine Analysis desselben, wie sie Kant unternahm, würde in der Tat den wahren wissen-schaftlichen Unterbau des Vedanta-systems liefern," and then refers to the special merit of Kant who followed quite different ways to arrive at the same truth : "wobei er jedoch die höchst merkwürdige Entdeckung machte, dass unter anderm drei wesentliche Bestandstücke der Welt, nämlich der Raum, die Zeit und die Kausalität nichts anderes als drei dem Subjekt anhaftende Formen der Erkenntnis sind." But we have seen already that Rūmī, following ways quite different from Kant, had already arrived exactly at the same important conclusion about time, space and causality, although naturally, because his purpose was not purely logical and epistemological, the thoroughness of the grounding of Kant is wanting in him.



## THE PROBLEM OF CREATION

**I**N the *weltanschauung* of Rūmī, the solid and objective universe of Materialism has no independent existence. For him the objective universe is only the back of the mirror whose face is the soul,<sup>1</sup> the heavens are embodiment of man's transcendental ideas and body is an instrument manufactured by the soul itself to serve its requirements. From this standpoint emphasis on the undivided Unity of the Spirit would lead to the familiar analogy of universe as a body whose soul is God. But as we know Rūmī's conception of the Realm of Spirit is not monistic or pantheistic to the extent of excluding the existence of a plurality of souls or monads which somehow possess a unique and partially independent existence, it is a question of fundamental importance to understand how he regarded the origin of the plurality of souls and their relation to the absolute spirit. We should not forget that he rejected *in toto* all attempts to solve these

۱. آئینه کردم عیان رویش دل و پشتش جهان

"I manifested the mirror, its face is the heart and its back is the world."

پس بود دل جو هر و عالم عرض سایه دل چون بود دل را غرض

"Hence the heart is the substance, and the world is the accident : how should the heart's shadow (reflexion) be the object of the heart's desire ?" (iii, 2266).

قالب از ما هست شدے ما ازو

"The body came into being from us, not we from it" (i, 1812).

جو هر است انسان و چرخ اورا عرض جمله فرع و سایه اند و او غرض



questions by the categories of human understanding. He expressly says that only a metaphysic of symbols and analogies is possible. But one must not be too serious with analogies and so he warns us against taking them too literally.

In the history of philosophy and religion we find three ways of looking at this relation : creation, generation and emanation.<sup>1</sup> The conception of creation is characteristic of the Semitic consciousness in general ; that of generation was introduced by the doctrine of divine sonship and emanation found its magnificent exposition in the system of Plotin. Rūmī would

1. It should be kept in mind that the three standpoints do not exclude one another and it is possible to believe in all the three together ; they might serve to picture the three aspects of the same ultimately unintelligible relation. Rūmī employs all the three. The idea of Emanation was doubtless of Neoplatonic origin but it received various interpretations at the hands of various Ṣūfīs. Says Rūmī :

یک گوهرے چو بیضا جوشید و گشت دریا  
کف گرد و کف زمیں شد وز دود او سہا شد  
الحق نہاں سپاہے پوشیدہ پادشاہے  
ہر لحظہ حملہ آورد آنگہ باصل وا شد  
گرچہ زما نہاں شد در عالمے روان شد  
تانہستش نخوانی گر از نظر جدا شد  
گرچہ صدف ز ساحل قطرہ ربود و گم شد  
در بحر جوید او را غواص کا شنا شد

"The one Substance boiled like an egg, and became the sea ; it foamed and the foam became earth, and from its spray arose the sky.

"In truth, a hidden army with a viewless king continually makes an onset, and then returns to its home."

Nicholson, *Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz*, p. 334.

Emanation as the spontaneous bursting forth of being is described sometimes by the Ṣūfīs as the irresistible desire of Beauty for self-manifestation. The famous tradition :

کنت کنزاً مخفیاً فاحببت ان أعرف فخلقت الخلق لکی أعرف

"I was a hidden treasure and I desired to be known so I created the creation in order that I might be known"

is made by Jāmī the basis of his beautiful poem in *Yūsuf Zulaikha* (p. 16). Emerson, the mystic essayist of America, has translated the above tradition in an emanistic sense :

"I was as a gem concealed  
Me my burning ray revealed."



consider them all as metaphors though the consciousness which gave them birth took them as earnest realities. Creation lays stress on the difference of nature between God and the created spirits analogous to the distinction between the watch and the watch-maker and connotes the relation of a manufactured article to the craftsman who has fashioned it. The conception of generation, however, suggests the identity of nature between the generator and the generated analogous to that which exists between the parents and the offspring. The picture of emanation though suggesting identity is characterised by the absence of will—water overflowing a cup or light emanating from a luminous body through a natural necessity. Or one might put it in another way. Creation emphasises the transcendence of God and emanation His immanence, and the conception of generation involving both difference and identity seems in a way to combine transcendence and immanence.

The Qur'ān in this connection had simply repeated the Biblical story of creation, with small modifications. But it seems that the dignity of the human spirit could not tolerate for ever the position of a manufactured article ; so the Jewish consciousness brought forth another extremely pregnant idea that man though created was created by God in His own image. Here we find indeed an extremely interesting commingling of the conceptions of creation and generation, which emphasises the idea of the resemblance of the offspring to the parent. That this idea sprang out of an unavoidable necessity of the human mind is proved by the fact that in spite of their differences the three great Semitic creeds are united on this point. Originating with Judaism it developed into the doctrine of the sonship of Christ in Christianity and appeared in the form of a Ḥadīth in Islam.<sup>1</sup>

1. "God created man in His image." خلق الانسان على صورته



For the Ṣūfī this conception had a special charm. He could not be satisfied with the naïve idea of creation and so he contrived to arrive at a compromise. There may be aspects of man that are phenomenal and created but still there is something in him, his soul, or the soul of his soul, or his essence that is eternal<sup>1</sup> and divine and somehow identical with God. Now the question is : Could one get this idea of creation out of the Qur'ān?<sup>2</sup> In spite of the fact that the Qur'ān in general speaks in terms of creation, the question must be answered in the affirmative. Like all other conceptions of higher Ṣūfism, the germs of it are found in the Qur'ān. Talking of the creation of man, it is said that it was His own Spirit that God breathed into Adam.<sup>3</sup> It requires no feat of imagination or skill of interpretation to assert on the basis of this scriptural text that the soul in man is the Spirit of God. Besides this the Qur'ān had exalted man to a degree where he could hardly be distinguished from God. Side by side with the intolerant monotheistic demand that it is sinful to pay homage to any being except God we see God asking the angels to pay homage to Adam, the refusal to comply with which is given as the only cause of the fall of Iblīs (Satan). Then we read in numerous

من آن روز بودم که اسما نبود      نشان از وجود مسما نبود ۱.

"I was on that day when the names were not  
Nor any sign of *existence endowed with name*."

زما شد مسما و اسما پدید      در آن روز کاینجا من وما نبود

"By me Names and Named were brought to view,  
On the day when there were not 'I and we,'"

—Ode 17 in Nicholson's *Selection*.

2. The Rock, xv. 29. God says to the angels :

فاذا سویته و نفخت فیه من روحی فقعوا له ساجدين

"So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down making obeisance to him."

3. The Adoration, xxxii. 9.

ثم سویته و نفخ فیه من روحه

"Then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit."



verses how the universe is made subservient to man.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes a particular action of man is thoroughly identified with the action of God, on the basis of which the mystics developed the view that the human and the divine wills are capable of absolute identification in a way that the individual can be said to have lost his separate existence. From the identity of wills to the identity of essence there was only a short step. It was a belief in this identity that is a source of the oft-quoted traditions : *تخلقوا باخلاق الله* [clothe yourselves with the qualities of God] and *المؤمن ينظر بنور الله*<sup>2</sup> [the believer sees things with the light of God], an idea which received a special development in the West in the doctrine of Malebranche that "we see all things in God."

Whatever may be said as to the rest of Creation, the human soul certainly came into existence by a process which is more akin to generation or that special form of it called incarnation. The first man in the history of Sūfism to assert this idea of the identity

The Bee, xvi. 12 :

و سخر لكم الليل والنهار والشمس والقمر والنجوم مسخرات بأمره ان  
في ذالك لآيات لقوم تعقلون

"And He has made subservient to you the night and the day and the sun and the moon and the stars ; they are made subservient by His commandment."

1. xxxviii. 20 :

الم تروا ان الله سخر لكم ما في السموات و ما في الارض

"Do you not see that Allah has made subservient to you, what is in the heavens and what is in the earth ?"

2. The full Hadīth is : *اتقوا فراسة المؤمن فانه ينظر بنور الله*

"Fear the insight of the faithful, for he sees with the light of God."

There is another Hadīth which has served in Sūfism a similar purpose :

قال الله تعالى لا يزال العبد يتقرب الى بالنوافل حتى احبه فاذا احبته

كنت سمعه الذى يسمع به و بصره الذى يبصر به (عن ابى هريره—بخارى)

Ghāzalī quotes it in the *Iḥyā* (p. 281) in the chapter on divine love of man (بيان محبة الله للعبد).



of the human and the divine was Hallāj,<sup>1</sup> who paid it with his life, because the idea though derivable from the Qur'ān was in the early centuries of Islam foreign to the orthodox view. But the idea was so real and fascinating that instead of dying with Hallāj it steadily became the common property of even orthodox Sūfism. Later Sūfism never doubted the truth of the assertion of Hallāj although some maintained that he ought not to have divulged the secret. But the secret having once been divulged became a "public secret" and has been coursing with the very life-blood of Islam ever since.

The idea of emanation entered Sūfism with Neoplatonism, which was sometimes clothed in the Semitic garb of creation, as, for instance, the Universal Reason, instead of being described as the first Emanation out of the Absolute One, was formulated in the obviously manufactured Hadīth, that the first thing that God created was Universal Reason.<sup>2</sup> The Neoplatonic Aristoteleanism out of which "the Brethren of Purity" (the Ikhwān al-Ṣafa) formulated their scheme of things, in its own way proclaimed the ultimate identity of the human and the divine and interpreted the simple non-metaphysical Qur'ānic idea of returning unto God<sup>3</sup> as reaching back of the soul to the Absolute Unity out of which ti has emanated.

- سبحان من اظهر ناسوته      سر سنا لاهوته الثاقب ١.  
ثم بدا لخلقه ظاهرا      في صورته الاكل والشارب

"Glory to God Who revealed in His humanity the secret of His radiant divinity,

"And then appeared to His creatures visibly in the shape of one who eats and drinks".

[*Kitab al-Tawasin* par Massignon (Paris), p. 130].

2. Goldziher is perfectly right in picking up this Hadīth as a typical example of Neoplatonism appearing as a prophetic tradition. [*Zeitschrift für assyriologic* (Strassbourg, 1909), p. 317.]

3. انا لله و انا اليه راجعون

That the human soul emanated out of God and must necessarily return unto him is a conception which one can easily get out of the syn-



Rūmī's *weltanschauung*, though assimilating all the elements mentioned above, still cannot be entirely identified with any of them. He tells us in unqualified terms that the transcendental self of man, which is his real and lasting essence, is uncreated and in so far as it is uncreated and real it is divine. How it got separated from the Primeval Unity, we do not know. The essence of Rūmī's religious consciousness is the sense of identity, with the pain of separation. God is the origin of the human soul, the *asl* (اصل) of it.

The soul is painfully conscious of a fall which is inexplicable. All life is an attempt at self-realisation which means the realisation of the original identity or return to the Origin. Life is a journeying back to God; it proceeds according to a process of evolution; the minerals develop into plants and plants into animals and animals into men and men into super-human beings, ultimately to reach back the starting point—a glorious interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses "God is the beginning and God is the end," and "To Him do we return."

The problem of the relation of the plurality of spirits to the Absolute Spirit presents one great difficulty to the religious consciousness. The fall of the spirits is generally attributed to individualisation and the greatest sin among the Sūfīs is the assertion of a separate individuality.<sup>1</sup> This has led to the common belief among the critics of Sūfism that it is monistic and pantheistic where all is absorbed by the

thesis of انا لله و انا اليه راجعون (We are from God and unto Him do we return), with the Arabic proverb كل شيء يرجع الى اصله (Everything returns to its source).

So Rūmī explains his longing for God :

هر کسے کو دور ماند از اصل خویش باز جوید روزگار وصل خویش

"Everyone who is left far from his source wishes back the time when he was united with it" (i, 4).

۱. این ثنا گفتن زمن ترک ثناست کاین دلیل هستی و هستی خطاست

"This uttering of praise (to Him) is (really) the omission of praise on my part, for this (praise) is a proof of (my) being, and being is asin" (i, 517).



Absolute. Emanation presents us with a descending and an ascending arc of a complete circle of Being, from the Absolute to the Absolute, which from the point of view of personality is from Nothing to Nothing, because the Absolute admits neither of plurality nor of attributes :

نکو گوئے بکو گفت است در ذات کہ التوحید اسقاط الاضافات

“It has been well said about the Essence or the Absolute that Unity is the elimination of relations.”

But all that we understand by religious life is possible only with the possibility of real relations either within the Absolute or between the Absolute and that which is somehow other than it. Rūmī was conscious of the difficulty and tried to transcend it with the help of his theory of knowledge. He says that the ideas of plurality and immanence and transcendence are born of the categories of the understanding—time, space, causality, etc. These are phenomenal categories and apply neither to the essence of the human and the divine souls, nor to their mutual relation. The spatial categories of contact and separation do not apply to the realm of the spirit. The human mind even in this empirical life has timeless and spaceless aspects.<sup>1</sup>

In the realm of spirit the many as well as the one are real and their identity also is a fact and this truth is a matter of experience that cannot be expressed in the term of numbers. Two things cannot

1. عالم خلق است با سوئے و جهات بے جهت داں عالم امر و صفات

“The world of creation is characterised by direction and space (but) know that the world of the (Divine) Command and Attributes is without (beyond) direction” (iv, 3692).

بے تعلق نیست مخلوقے بدو آن تعلق هست بے چوں اے عمو

“No created being is unconnected with Him : that connection, O uncle, is indescribable” (iv, 3695).

زانکہ فصل و وصل نبود در رواں غیر فصل و وصل نندیشد گان

“Because in the spirit there is no separating and uniting, while (our) thought cannot think except of separating and uniting” (iv, 3696).



exist in the same point of space but two wills can be thoroughly identified of which the highest example is that of the lover merging his desire in the desire of the beloved.

It is not so much the problem of Creation as the question of development which stands in the centre of Rūmī's outlook on life. It is interesting to note how he tries to reconcile the idea of creation with his evolutionary conceptions. He puts it allegorically that although man was created out of clay still his figure was not formed all at once because God acts through gradual development : *ز آنکه تدریج از سننهای شاه است* : (For gradual development is the way of the King). The figure of Adam was completed through a long period in which every day was equal to a thousand years : *زین سحر تا آن سحر سالی هزار* : (From this morning to the other morning, there is a period of one thousand years).

Now let us examine closely his conception of evolution where we find an astonishing anticipation of modern theories on the subject.



## EVOLUTION

ONE of the central features about Rūmī is that he is out and out an evolutionary thinker and in this respect he seems to possess a system of philosophy which in the way he has worked it out makes it quite an original product of his mind, though no doubt in this as well as in many other problems that he has discussed he had his predecessors.

Aristotle was a believer in development in which at every step every entelechy is matter as well as form—matter in respect to the form higher than it and form in comparison with the less formed matter in which it was trying to realise itself. More than in Aristotle one could discover the germs and motives for evolutionary thought in Neoplatonism with its scheme of Emanation and Return from and into the Primeval and Eternal One.<sup>1</sup> But the conception was absolutely foreign to Semitic religious thought. The cosmology of all the three Semitic religions believed in creation in time in six days out of nothing and it was believed all through medieval Christianity that more than six thousand years had not elapsed since the beginning of creation. The Qur'ān with small additions and subtractions had substantially repeated the same conception. So there is absolutely

1. *Über Plotin*, S. 110. R. Eucken, *Lebensanschauungen der grossen Denker* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1922).



no doubt that the origin of it cannot be sought in the Semitic consciousness. For Greek philosophy the world was eternal but there was no forward and upward movement that could develop life eternally. The belief in eternal repetition of similar world-epochs seems to be common to all Greek antiquity.

In the Indian systems of philosophy too there was no system that could in any way present an evolutionary doctrine.<sup>1</sup> It is the transmigration of souls that seems to determine the whole outlook on life. This theory no doubt contained the idea of transmutation of species but absolutely in a different connection far removed from any idea of natural development. A man as a consequence of his deeds may be born next time as a quadruped or a bird or as a worm. Any continuous development of the lower to the higher was never dreamt of.

The only thinker of antiquity whose world-picture could be developed into a theory of Evolution was Plotin. He believed in a continuous chain of life, an hierarchy of Beings emanating out of the original "One," every following stage being lower. But even the lowest, on account of its heavenly origin, strives to return to it. So there is a continuous movement through the Universe and a circle of Becoming from the lower to the higher and from the higher to the lower. But this eternal Becoming of the world out of God was for Plotin not a process in time; in the realm of appearance he believed in the eternal repetition of an infinite series of similar world periods. However, in the graded continuity of Being there is an order and an hierarchy. Every Being has its fixed place and only in its own fixed place it receives its share of Life and Perfection, which is communicated to it by a Being next higher to it, and which it has in turn to communicate to the one immediately lower than

1. Deussen's *Vedanta*, Leipzig Brockhaus (1923), *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* by Max Muller.



itself.<sup>1</sup> But in spite of this, Plotin was not a believer in the transformation of beings ; the place of every being was fixed. Only one further step was taken in Islam in the tenth century C.E., by the authors of Ikhwān al-Ṣafa,<sup>2</sup> whose system was a combination of Aristoteleanism and Neoplatonism. By a feat of philosophical imagination they developed the theory of Evolution which made them the predecessors of Darwin and Spencer. In two other thinkers of Islam we find a statement of the theory. Nazzām<sup>3</sup> taught that creation took place only once, with infinite possibilities and potentialities. All elements that have ever come into existence or shall ever develop in the future were latent or potentially present in the stuff originally created—minerals, plants, animals, men. They are only the gradual realisation of those latent potentialities—the present and future are only the unfolding of the past.

The clearest statement of the doctrine, however, before Rūmī, is found in Ibn Miskwaih.<sup>4</sup> The combination of primary substances produced the mineral kingdom ; the inorganic matter passed into the lowest form of plant life like grass whose growth is

1. It should be noted that this was the philosophical basis of hierarchy, made the basis of the visible and invisible organisation by the Catholic Church. Islam abolished it but it was taken over by the Sūfīs who even to this day are staunch believers in the invisible hierarchy of their *Siddīqs*, *Qutubs*, *Abdāls*, etc.

2. The 51 brochures of Ikhwān al-Ṣafa (إخوان الصفا) published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

There is a popular treatise by Dietrich on the conception of evolution as developed by Ikhwān al-Ṣafa : 'Der Darwinismus in 10 und 19 Jahrhunderten' (Leipzig, 1878)

3. On Nazzām (231) see Shahrastānī, *Milal wan-nahl*. He was a teacher and companion of Khalīfa Mā'mūn. He is mentioned by every biographer as extremely learned but heretical Mu'tazila. Says Shahrastānī :

و قد طالع كثيراً من كتب الفلاسفة و خلط كلامهم بكلام المعتزلة

Also Boer, *Geschichte de Philosophie in Islam*. Also D. B. MacDonald, *Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, p. 141 (London, Routledge & Sons).

4. Quoted by Shiblī, 'Ilm al-Kalām (Maṭba' Anwār al-Maṭābi', Lucknow).



spontaneous; then the plant life developed into its highest forms where branches, leaves, flowers and fruit are differentiated and the developed tree forms a perfect organism in which some of the properties of animality are evolved, like the differentiation of sexes. In the transition stage from the plant to the animal we find certain organisms like the coral that belong to both the realms. In the first beginnings of animality nothing but voluntary motion distinguishes the worms from the plants. At first only the sense of touch is developed which in the course of evolution differentiates into various senses. Humanity is touched in the ape which gradually develops erect stature and power of understanding similar to man. Here animality ends and humanity begins.

Now let us see in what way Rūmī assimilated, reproduced and developed the foregoing conceptions, with which, we can presume, he was well acquainted. For him too the lowest form of life is matter. He has neither a philosophical nor a scientific theory about the origin or nature of it. For him there is nothing dead; matter too is a form of life<sup>1</sup> though the lowest form of life is known to us. But has it an existence independent of mind? No. Rūmī is a thorough-going idealist. The Universe is nothing but the outward and opaque form of the Ideal. "When God wanted to manifest Himself He created a mirror whose face is the soul and whose back is the Universe."<sup>2</sup>

1. باد و خاک و آب و آتش بنده اند بامن و تو مرده باحق زنده اند

"Air and earth and water and fire are (His) slaves: with you and me they are dead, but with God they are alive." (i, 838).

بادہ در جوشش گدائے جوش ماست چرخ در گردش گدائے هوش ماست  
بادہ از ماست شد نے ما ازو قالب از ما هست شد نے ما ازو

"Wine in ferment is a beggar suing for our ferment; Heaven in revolution is a beggar suing for our consciousness.

"Wine became intoxicated with us, not we with it; the body came into being from us, not we from it." (i, 1811, 1812).

2. آئینہ کردم عیان رویش دل و پشتش جہاں

"I manifested the mirror, its face is the heart and its back is the world."



My body is a product of my soul, not my soul a product of my body." In the realm of appearance matter was the first form of existence or one might put it like this that the soul started its existence in the form of matter consisting of dimly conscious monads and for an immensely long period lived as that and was driven about without any choice of its will.<sup>1</sup> It lived as fire and water, as wind and cloud until it entered the next higher stage, that of plant life.<sup>2</sup> Rūmī knows as little as modern science as to how this transition took place. He teaches us

۱. صد هزاران سال بودم در مطار همچو ذرات هوا بے اختیار

'Hundreds of thousands of years I was flying (to and fro) involuntarily, like the notes in the air' (vi, 220).

۲. آمده اول باقلیم جهاد وز جهادی در نباتی اوفتاد  
 سالها اندر نباتی عمر کرد وز جهادی یاد نا ورد از نبرد  
 وز نباتی چون ب حیوانی فتاد نامدش حال نباتی هیچ یاد  
 جز همین سلی که دارد سوئے آن خاصه در وقت بهار و ضیمران  
 همچو میل کودکان باماد ران سر میل خود نداند در لبان  
 باز از حیوان سوئے انسانیش میکشید آن خالق که دانیش  
 هم چنین اقلیم تا اقلیم رفت تاشد اکنون عاقل و دانا و زفت  
 عقلهائے اولینش یاد نیست هم ازیں عقلش تحول کرد نیست  
 تارهد زین عقل پر حرص و طلب صد هزاران عقل بیند بوالعجب

"He came first to the inorganic realm and from there stepped over to the vegetable kingdom. Living long as a plant he had no memory of his struggles in the inorganic realm. Similarly rising from the plant to the animal life he forgets his plant life retaining only an attraction for it which he feels specially in the spring, ignorant of the secret and cause of this attraction like the infant at the breast who knows not why he is attracted to the mother.

"Then the Creator draws him from animality towards humanity, So he went from realm to realm until he became rational, wise and strong. As he has forgotten his former types of reason (every stage being governed by a particular type of reason) so he shall pass beyond his present Reason. When he gets rid of this coveting intellect he shall see a thousand other types of Reason." (iv, 3637-3641 ; 3646-3649).

از جهادی مردم و نامی شدم وز نما مردم ب حیوان سرز دم  
 مردم از حیوانی و آدم شدم پس چه ترسم که ز مردن کم شدم  
 حمله دیگر بمیرم از بشر تا بر آرم از ملائک بال و پر



that there is only one way of rising from the lower to the higher stage and that is by assimilation of the lower into the higher. He untiringly repeats the instance of matter assuming organic life by getting assimilated by a plant and plant rising to animal life by getting assimilated into an animal organism . . . . So in order to raise matter into a higher form he must presume that some plant was always there. As his purpose was not scientific so he has neither put nor tried to answer this question. But in his theory of Creation there are other elements which might have served him to understand this transition. As a thoroughly teleological thinker, he believed that necessity is not only the mother of invention, it is the mother of creation as well. Even God would not have created the heaven and the earth if He had not been urged by an irresistible inner necessity. He does not believe like Darwin in a passive and mechanical natural selection. He seems to have anticipated Bergson in the idea that Evolution is creative. The "Elan Vital," the will to live a higher and fuller life, creates new organs.<sup>1</sup> For Rūmī too life is nothing but

بار دیگر از ملک قرباں شوم      آنچه اندر و هم ناید آن شوم  
پس عدم گردم عدم چون ارغنون      گویدم کانا الیه راجعون

"I died from the inorganic realm and became a plant, then I died from the plant life and became an animal. Dying from animality I became a man, so why should I be afraid of becoming anything less through another death? In the next step I shall die from humanity to develop wings like the angels. Then again I shall sacrifice my angelic self and become that which cannot enter imagination. Then I become non-existent when the divine organ strikes the note 'We are to return unto Him.'" (iii, 1-3, 5, 6).

I. زانکہ بے حاجت خداوند عزیز      مے نہ بخشد هیچ کس را هیچ چیز  
ور نبودے حاجت افلاک ہم      هفت گردوں ناوریدی از عدم  
آفتاب و ماہ و این استارگان      جز بھاجت کے پدید آمد عیاں  
پس کمند هستہا حاجت بود      قدر حاجت مرد را آلت بود  
پس چو حاجت شد کمند هستہا      قدر حاجت مے رسد از حق عطا  
پس بیفزا حاجت اے محتاج زود      تا بجوشد در کرم دریائے جود

"Because without need the Almighty God does not give anything to any one; if there were no necessity the seven heavens would



a product of the will to live and ever dissatisfied with the present equipment, life creates new desires, to fulfil which new organs come into existence. According to this theory of life, matter might have crystallised and organised itself into a rudimentary vegetable organism driven by the internal impulse to live a fuller life. Then there was another transition from the plant to the animal life and then from the animal to man.

In the evolution from matter to man the whole theory really seems to be an anticipation of Darwinism and therefore some of the English Darwinists quote with great pleasure Rūmī's famous lines on evolution.<sup>1</sup> That a mystic should have shown the way to the scientists and the philosophers, is one of the rarest phenomena in the history of thought. But the mystic neither begins with naturalism nor ends with it. His matter, to start with, is not the matter of the materialists or the Darwinists. It was from the beginning only the outer form of the spirit; it consisted rather of the monads of Leibniz than the atoms of Democritus. Then again Darwin ends with man but Rūmī does not stop there. Nor do the mystic and the scientist agree about the forces that lead to this evolution. Darwin's doctrine consists of struggle for existence, chance variations and natural selection. So far as the description of the struggle for existence is considered, most ingenious statements of it are met with in the Mathnavī.<sup>2</sup> All life is a

not have stepped out of non-existence; the sun, the moon and the stars could not have come into existence without a necessity; so necessity is the cause of all existence, and *according to his necessity man is endowed with organs*. Therefore, O needy one, increase your need so that God's Beneficence may be moved (to bestow new instruments of life on you)." (ii, 3274, 3277-3280).

1. For instance, Clodd, in his book *Evolution*.

2. این جهان جنگ است کل چوں بنگری  
 ذره با ذره چو دین با کفری  
 جنگ فعلی هست از جنگ نهان  
 زین تخالف آن تخالف را بدان  
 جنگ طبعی جنگ فعلی جنگ قول  
 در میان جزوها حربیست هول  
 این جهان زین جنگ قائم می بود  
 در عناصر در نگر تاحل شود



battlefield ; it is the war of all against all ; every atom is struggling with every other atom. Creation consists of a struggle of contradictory forces ; without this universal struggle there would be no Universe. Only the Realm of Spirit is a Realm of Peace, and only that part of the Universe that identifies itself with the *One* that stands outside this struggle enters the Realm of Peace.

The higher lives upon the lower and there is no injustice in it<sup>1</sup> ; the higher develops thereby and the lower is raised. Matter loses itself in the plant and becomes a plant, and plant loses itself in the animal and becomes an animal, and animal loses itself in man and becomes man. With Rūmī there is no development by chance variations. For him develop-

پس بنائے خلق بر اضداد بود لا جرم ما جنگیم از ضرو سود  
هست احوالم خلاف ہم دگر هر یکے باهم مخالف در اثر  
گوهر جاں چوں و رائے فصلم است خوئے او این نیست خوئے کبریاست  
این تنافی از ضد آید ضد را چوں نباشد ضد نبود جز بقا

"This universe when you look at it closely presents a universal struggle—atom struggling with atom like faith against infidelity. This struggle in action is the objective form of the principle of opposition which has its basis in their inner nature. There is war in words and war in deeds and war in nature; between the parts of the Universe there is a terrible war. This war is the very constitution of the Universe; look into the elements and you understand it. Creation is based on opposition; therefore every creature became warlike to get some benefit and avoid some injury. This struggle is not a phenomenon only of the outward nature; even thy own self is a battlefield of mental states, one state opposing the other. The essence of the soul transcends these oppositions; its nature is not (contradictory) like these; it is divine. Only the opposite destroys the opposite; where there is no opposite there is eternal life." (vi, 36 sq.)

حلق حیوان چوں بریده شد بعدل حلق انسان رست و افزون گشت فضل  
حلق انسان چوں ببرد هین ببین تاچه زاید کن قیاس آن برین  
حلق ثالث زاید و تیار او شربت حق باشد و انوار او

"When the throat of an animal is cut duly (in the manner prescribed by law), there grows (from it) the throat of man, and its excellence is increased (thereby).

"When a (martyred) man's throat is cut, come, consider what the result will be. Judge of this (case) by the analogy of that (case).

"A third throat will be born, and care of it will be (taken by) the *sherbet* of God and His lights." (i, 3873-3875).



ment consists in the creation of an ever-increasing need for expansion and by assimilation into a higher organism.

So far as development by assimilation is concerned, the rise from matter to man is quite obvious and intelligible ; but now the question arises : Where is the organism higher than man into which man should get assimilated? Rūmī says: "From man to angel and then to God." It is just here that his wonderful analogy holds good that on the land the stages are marked but in the sea there are neither roads nor footsteps nor stages. Who are the angels ? They are sometimes placed by him above man and sometimes below him. He says that as there are visible physical organisms so there are invisible spiritual organisms and God is the Universal Spiritual Organism in whom man should try to get assimilated. Rūmī is specially fond of the analogy of the organism,<sup>1</sup> because it affords the best model for understanding the nature of life and the connection of the whole

|   |  |
|---|--|
| ۱. در تن مردم شود او روح شاد<br>مستحیلش جان کند از سلسبیل<br>تاچه باشد قوت آن جان جان<br>پس ز خاکش خوشه ها بر ساختند<br>قیمتش افزود و نان شد جان فزا<br>گشت عقل و جان و فهم هوشمند<br>یعجب الزراع آمد بعد کشت | نان چو در سفره است باشد آن جاد<br>در دل سفره نگردد مستحیل<br>قوت جان است این اے راست خوان<br>گندمے را زیر خاک انداختند<br>بار دیگر کوفتندش ز آسیا<br>باز نان را زیر دندان کوفتند<br>باز آن جان چونکه محو عشق گشت |
|---|--|

"When bread is (wrapped) in the tablecloth it is the inanimate thing (so called), (but) in the human body it becomes the glad spirit (of life).

"It does not become transmuted in the heart of (within) the tablecloth : the (animal) soul transmutes it with (the water of) *Salsabil*.

"O thou who readest aright, such is the power of the soul : what, then, must be the power of that Soul of soul ?" (i, 1474-1476).

"They cast a grain of wheat under earth, then from its earth they raised up ears of corn ;

"Once more they crushed it with the mill : its value increased and it became soul-invigorating bread ;

"Again they crushed the bread under their teeth : it became the mind and spirit and understanding of one endowed with reason ;

"Again, when that spirit became lost in Love, it became (as that which) rejoiceth the sowers after the sowing." (i, 3165-3168).



to its parts. But he is quite conscious of the fact that no analogy, however instructive, can stand logical analysis: analogies should not be strained. So he says that there is no logical way of understanding the relation of the Universal Whole, the God-Organism to its parts.<sup>1</sup>

As to what is the nature of the force that drives this process his reply is that it is *Love*. All the processes of assimilation, growth, and reproduction are manifestations of Love. Without Love there would have been no movement in the universe. It is ultimately the love of the Origin of all Being. The first Beloved, the Eternal Beauty, is the motive force in the process of Evolution. "The striving for the ideal is love's movement towards Beauty, which according to Plato and Ibn Sina<sup>2</sup> is identical with Perfection. Beneath the visible evolution of forms is the force of love which actualises all striving, movement and progress. Things are so constituted that they hate non-existence and love the joy of individuality in various forms. The indeterminate matter is made to assume, by the inner force of love, various forms and rises higher and higher in the scale of 'Beauty.'

1. 

|                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| عضو از تن قطع شد مردار شد    | جزو از کل قطع شد بیکار شد   |
| این نه آن کل است کو ناقص شود | جزو ازین کل گر برو یکسو رود |
| چیز ناقص گفته شد بهر مثال    | قطع و وصل او نیاید در مقال  |

"(When) the part is severed from the whole, it becomes useless ;  
(when) the limb is severed from the body, it becomes carrion.

"If the part be severed and fall asunder from this (spirited) whole,  
this is not the (kind of) whole that is liable to defect.

"Separation from it and conjunction with it are not (really) predictable ; the defective thing has been mentioned (only) for the sake of comparison." (iii, 1936, 1939, 1940).

2. Ibn Sīna's *Fragment on Love* gives a thoroughly developed theory which no doubt has its origin in the Dialogues of Plato. It is preserved in the collected works of Avicenna in the British Museum Library and has been edited by N. A. F. Mehren (Leiden, 1894).

A summary of this fragment is given by Shaikh Muhammad Iqbal, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, Lahore, n.d. (Bazm-i-Iqbal), pp. 32-36 on Avicenna.



“The same force of natural or constitutional love is working in the life of beings higher than man.”

Love is for Rūmī the essence of life, the source as well as the goal of it. Let us try to understand more closely what he means by it.



## LOVE

**I**F THERE is anything in Rūmī's mysticism that defies all attempts at analysis, that is his ecstatic utterances about Love. It is exactly here that theory has so very little in common with life and experience, and the words of Mephistopheles are justified: "Grau . . . . ist alle Theorie Und grün des Lebens goldner Baum." If it were concerned only with lyrical fervours and ecstasies, there would no doubt be much that touches our own inner chords and stirs emotions in the soul that are too deep for words. But that is not all that we find in Rūmī. He tells us that what he means by Love is indescribable and the attempt to define it is as baffling as to define life itself. Life as well as love, not in spite of, but on account of their immediacy cannot be defined.<sup>1</sup> He tells us that it is not logic but music<sup>2</sup> that is a partial medium of

۱. سر من از ناله من دور نیست    لیک چشم و گوش را آن نور نیست  
تن زجان و جان زتن مستور نیست    لیک کس را دید جان دستور نیست

"My secret is not far from my plaint, but ear and eye lack the light (whereby it should be apprehended). Body is not veiled from soul, nor soul from body, yet none is permitted to see the soul."  
(i, 7, 8).

۲. نے حریف هر که از یارے برید    پرده هائش پرده هائے ما درید  
هرچه گویم عشق را شرح و بیان    چون بعشق آیم خجل باشم از آن  
گرچه تفسیر زبان روشن گریست    لیک عشق بی زبان روشن تراست

"The reed is the comrade of busy one who has been parted from a friend : its strains pierced our hearts."



its expression, and love being paradoxical in its nature, music, that is its vehicle, becomes paradoxical too : "Poison and Antidote at the same time." "Our sweetest songs are those that tell us of saddest thoughts." Love is the greatest mystery of life and music is the garb in which it symbolises itself in the phenomenal realm.

سر پنهان است اندر زیر و بم فاش گر گویم جہاں برہم زخم  
ہمچونے زہرے و تریاقے کہ دید ہمچونے دمساز و مشتاقے کہ دید

"There is a secret in the melody of the flute which if divulged would upset the scheme of things.

"Who ever saw a poison and antidote like the reed ? Who ever saw a sympathiser and a longing lover like the reed ?"

But the indescribability of the experience does not hinder him from giving to the uninitiated a kind of philosophy of Love. It is just this aspect that we propose to consider. So far as the theories of love are concerned, a part of his arguments and views can be directly traced back to Plato who has had a decisive influence on all mysticism, both Islamic and Christian, by his conception of a supersensuous Reality, as well as Eros as a cosmical power. Rūmī's Love as an experience was not a product of any theory ; as something intimately personal, it cannot be a subject of criticism. But the conceptual apparatus that he employs to philosophise about love requires to be understood in its historical connections. The contents of *Phaedrus* and *Symposium* that give us most of the theories of Love ever conceived by man were not unknown to the thinkers of Islam. Ibn Sīna's (Avicenna) *Fragment on Love*<sup>1</sup> is mostly a reproduction of the dialogues in *Symposium*. Love as a cosmic force and its universal

"Whatsoever I say in exposition and explanation of Love, when I come to Love (itself) I am ashamed of that (explanation).

"Although the commentary of the tongue makes (all) clear, yet tongueless love is clearer." (i, 112, 113).

1. This fragment on love forms part of his collected works preserved in the British Museum Library and has been edited by N. A. F. Mehren (Leiden, 1894).



operation in Nature ; Love as the movement towards Beauty which being identical with Goodness and Truth represents Perfection and the Highest Idea, and Love as the inherent desire of the individual for immortality ; in short, the whole outline of the theory of Life given by Avicenna is a simple repetition of the Platonic theory of Love. The processes of Assimilation, Growth, Reproduction are so many manifestations of Love. All things are moving towards Eternal Beauty and the worth of a thing is proportionate to its realisation of that beauty in itself.

Before coming to that aspect of Rūmī's conception of Love where he differs from Plato, let us first pick out from the Mathnavī the ideas that run parallel to the conceptions expounded in the dialogues of Plato.

(1) The idea developed in Phaedrus that Love is not utilitarian, Rūmī gives us back with the addition that it is the intellect that is utilitarian and that weighs profit and loss before taking a step. Love considering itself to be an end in itself does not ask 'Why' before it sacrifices. As a divine madness, it is directly opposed to the calculated Love of the sophists.

عقل راہ نا امیدى کے رود      عشق باشد کان طرف بر سر دود  
لا آبالی عشق باشد نے خرد      عقل آن جوید کزاں سودے برد

"How should Reason wend the way of despair ? 'Tis Love that runs on its head in that direction.

"Love is reckless, not Reason : Reason seeks that from which it may get some profit." (vi, 1966-1967).

نے خدا را امتحانے مے کنند      نے در سود و زیانے میزنند

"Neither do they put God to any test, nor do they work at the door of any profit or loss." (vi, 1974).

(2) In the speech of Agathon that precedes the speech of Socrates, we find the view of the young Plato that Love is Love of the Beautiful and the Beautiful alone is worth our love and homage. Rūmī repeats



the same conception in different words when he says that Perfect and Eternal Beauty belongs to God, and all that is beautiful in the phenomenal world is only a passing reflection of the Eternal Beauty of God and is related to God as sunlight is related to the sun. The beauty of a thing is like the illumination of a wall by the sun; when the sun looks away from it, lo! it is dark again.<sup>1</sup> So our love should not stop short at the beautiful thing whose light is only transient and borrowed, but rise from the phenomenal to the noumenal origin of all beauty.

مونسی مگزیں خسی را از خسی عاریت باشد درو آن مونسی

(3) Love is a principle of Unification and Assimilation. The force of attraction in every atom and one form of life losing itself in another form (Assimilation) and thereby resulting in Growth—all are manifestations of the form of Love.

گر نبودے عشق هستی کے بدے      کے زدے ناں بر تو و تو کے شدے  
نان تو شد از چہ؟ ز عشق و اشتہا      ورنہ ناں را کے بدے تا جاں رہے  
عشق نان مردہ را جاں کند      جاں کہ فانی بود جاویداں کند

“If there had not been Love, how should there have been existence ?  
How should bread have attached itself to you and become (assimilated to) you ?

“The bread became you : through what ? Through (your) love and appetite ; otherwise, how should the bread have had any access to the (vital) spirit ?

“Love makes the dead bread into spirit : it makes the spirit that was perishable everlasting.” (v, 2012-2014).

(4) That Love as a cosmogonical principle is the

1. آن شعاعے بود بر دیوار شاں      جانب خورشید وارفٹ آن نشان  
بر ہر آن چیزے کہ آفتد آن شعاع      تو بر آن ہم عاشق آئی اے شجاع  
عشق تو بر ہر چہ آن موجود بود      آن ز وصف حق چو زر اندود بود

“That (friendship) was a radiance (cast) upon their wall : the sign (of the sun) went back towards the sun.

“On whatsoever thing that radiance may fall, thou becomest in love with that (thing), O brave man.

“On whatsoever existent thing thy love (is bestowed), that (thing) is gilded with Divine qualities.” (iii, 552-554).



origin and beginning of life, an idea that Phaedrus put in the mythological form by saying that Eros belongs to the oldest gods. Love as a principle of the genesis of the world was present in Greek thought even before Plato. Hesiod had taught that in the beginning of all things was Chaos out of which sprang at first Earth and Love,<sup>1</sup> i.e. the dead substratum and the informing principle.

گر نبودے عشق ہستی کے بدے      کے زدے ناں بر تو و تو کے شدے

“If there had not been Love, how should there have been existence ?  
How should bread have attached itself to you and become  
(assimilated to) you ? ” (v, 2012).

But in spite of all this parallelism of ideas sketched above, there are some important and fundamental differences between Plato and Rūmī in their conceptions of the nature and function of Love. Most of the conceptions given above as parallel with Rūmī's ideas are the views of the various speakers in the Dialogues that throw light on the different sides of the problem and represent different ways of looking at it. Plato's own views are only those put in the mouth of Socrates and can be summed up as follows :

(1) Love as a craving after immortality in its various forms through procreation and through intellectual and artistic productions or through heroic deeds.

(2) Love as a movement towards the idea of Perfect Beauty in order to look at it in its purest form in which the soul once looked at it before its connection with matter and sensibility.

(3) Love as a mediator between the two worlds.  
(An idea taken up and developed by Christian dogma.)

1. Compare it with the following :

گر نبودے بہر عشق پاک را      کے وجودے داد سے افلاک را

“Had it not been for pure Love's sake, how should I have bestowed  
an existence on the heavens ? ” (v, 2739).



The fundamental difference between the two thinkers can be best understood when we examine the relation of Rationalism with Irrationalism in their respective outlooks on Life. Plato was a rationalist in so far as he believed in the knowability of the ground of Being through theoretical Reason. What he calls Eternal Beauty was nothing but one of the highest Ideas or the attractive side of the picture of Eternal Truth. But in Truth there is nothing individual and personal; so his Highest Idea or his God is impersonal, theoretical Truth that sits in the Ideal Realm unmoved and untouched by its worshippers and admirers. It is something objective and outside the human soul, only to be looked at and admired like a perfect piece of art. Love, which taken by itself is an irrational element, is only a means to an end, which is the realisation of theoretical Truth. So in the end Eros of Plato is nothing but Spinoza's intellectual love of God.

Rūmī, in contrast with Plato, is an Irrationalist. In him the position between Reason and Love is reversed. He does not believe in the knowability of the ground of Being through Theoretical Reason. The categories of the Understanding (خرد) or what he calls the Particular Reason (عقل جزوی) are from their very nature incapable of grasping the ultimate Reality and on account of their discursive and dualistic nature cannot comprehend the Unitary Essence of Existence. Reason for him is a light and a guide but not a goal. As life in its essence is non-intellectual, so the Eternal Beauty that attracts the lover is not the beauty that is the "Effulgence of Truth." Rūmī employs the Platonic terminology for views that are poles apart from Plato. For Plato the word 'Ultra-rational' would have been utter nonsense. When reason is identical with the ultimate reality, how can there be anything beyond it? That explains again why the Eros of Plato is theoretically intelligible and the Love (عشق) of Rūmī defies all description. The



nature of God and the nature of the human soul are ultrarational; so their deepest and ultimate relation must necessarily be so.<sup>1</sup>

It is a characteristic feature of Rūmī's world of thought that his central conception is not Truth or Knowledge of God but Life. It is the organism and its function of Growth and Assimilation that presents to him a picture which explains life more than any system of intellectualistic metaphysics. Love is a paradox in the sense that in it by giving we take and by dying we live. This process of dying to live is represented by organic life. Inorganic matter becomes organic by dying to itself and living a higher life in the plant and so can the plant be exalted into still higher life by dying unto itself and living in the animal. The whole course of evolution is an illustration of the principle of dying to live.

Rūmī finds the principle of growth and development through the organic power of assimilation as the highest principle of explanation. Although true to his anti-intellectual metaphysics, he admits the impossibility of explaining the connection and the interaction of body and soul in terms of spatial contact and physical causation, yet he untiringly points to the miraculous power of transformation which we can see everywhere in Nature. Mechanism may try to explain phenomena by the principle of identity of cause and

I. اتصالے کے تکلف بے قیاس      هست رب الناس را با جان ناس

"There is a union beyond description or analogy between the Lord of Man and the spirit of Man." (iv, 760)

ہے تعلق نیست مخلوقے بدو      آن تعلق هست بے چوں اے عمو  
زاں کہ فصل و وصل نبود در رواں      غیر فصل و وصل نیندیشد گان

"No created being is unconnected with Him: that connection, O uncle, is indescribable.

"Because in the spirit there is no separating and uniting, while (our) thought cannot think except of separating and uniting." (iv, 3695-3696).

ایں تعلق را خرد چوں رہ برد      بستہ وصل است و فصل است این خرد

"How should the intellect find the way to this connection? This intellect is in bondage to separation and union." (iv, 3699).



effect, but Mechanism is an extremely partial abstraction from the Real. Reality presents to us nothing but qualitative transformation. Fuel turning into fire and bread turning into life and consciousness point to the incommensurability of the cause and the effect.<sup>1</sup> The 'how' of it may not be intelligible but the fact itself is so evident and incontrovertible that for unsophisticated consciousness it hardly requires any proof. Now Rūmī pushes the analogy further and asks us if it is not justifiable to believe that something like the principle that holds good in the evolution from man to matter should hold good further up from man to the all-embracing spiritual organism—God.<sup>2</sup>

1. هر چه جز عشق است شد ما کول عشق دوجہاں یک دانہ پیش نول عشق

"Everything except love is devoured by love : to the beak of love the two worlds are (but) a single grain." (v, 2726).

باز نان را زیر دندان کوفتند گشت عقل و جان و فہم ہوشمند  
باز آن جان چونکہ محو عشق گشت یعجب الزراع آمد بعد کشت

"Again they crushed the bread under their teeth : it became the mind and spirit and understanding of one endowed with reason.

"Again, when that spirit became lost in Love, it became (as that which) rejoiceth the sowers after the sowing." (i, 3167-3168).

ذوق جنس از جنس خود باشد یقین ذوق جزو از کل خود باشد بہ بین

"The delight of (every) kind is certainly in its own kind (congener) : the delight of the past, observe, is in its whole." (i, 889).

ہمچو آب و نان کہ جنس ما نبود گشت جنس ما و اندر ما فزود

"As (for instance) water and bread, which were not our congeners, became homogeneous with us and increased within us (added to our bulk and strength)." (i, 891).

اے خنک آن مرد کز خود رستہ شد در وجود زندہ پیوستہ شد

"Oh, happy is the man who was freed from himself and united with the existence of a living one !" (i. 1535).

2. عشق بحرے آسماں بر وے کفے چون زلیخا در ہوائے یوسفی

دور گردونہا ز موج عشق داں چون نبودے عشق بفسردے جہاں

کے جہادی محو گشتے در نبات کے فدائے روح گشتے نامیات

روح کے گشتے فدائے آن دمے کز نسیمش حاملہ شد مریمے

"Love is an (infinite) ocean, on which the heavens are (but) a flake of foam : (they are distraught) like Zalikha in desire for a Joseph.

"Know that the wheeling heavens are turned by waves of Love : were it not for Love, the world would be frozen (inanimate).



That is the conclusion to which Rūmī's interpretation of Assimilation as a process of love leads him. So here we find a tremendous difference between the Eros of Plato and the '*Ishq*' of Rūmī; the former leading to the gazing of impersonal intellectual beauty and the latter leading us to be partakers of Infinite Life by becoming living organs in the Life of Life.

Philosophy attempts to find a thread of unity running through the multiplicity of phenomena. This attempt can succeed only partially, because Reason can never overcome the dualism of the subject and the object. In the words of Rūmī, "there is a squint in the eye of the intellect," it sees double that which in reality is one. It is intellectual analysis that splits reality into two which it does not know afterwards how to bind again. As a principle of unification, Love stands higher than Reason. Reason differentiates and separates,<sup>1</sup> while Love binds and assimilates the heterogeneous and makes it homogeneous with itself. One cannot help noticing a striking resemblance between Rūmī's view of love and the various types of the philosophy of intuition developed in post-Kantian idealism. As his conception of the pure Ego is fundamentally the same as that of Fichte, so his utterances about that ultimate intuition which he calls Love have a marked similarity with the intuition of Schelling and Bergson. Rūmī's views about the relation of the intellect to the spring of life within us are an astounding anticipation of the views of Schopenhauer and Bergson—that intellect is only a utilitarian product, an instrument in the hand of "will to live" and hence is incapable of

"How would an inorganic thing disappear (by change) into a plant?  
How would vegetive things sacrifice themselves to become (enclosed with) spirit?"

"How would the spirit sacrifice itself for the sake of that Breath  
by the draft whereof a Mary was made pregnant?" (v, 3853-3856).

آں یکے زان سوئے وصف است و حال جز دوئی ناید بمیدان مقال ۱.

"That Unity is beyond description and condition: nothing comes into the arena (domain) of speech except duality." (vi, 2034).



measuring the depths and scanning the nature of our immediate intuition of life.

عقل جزوی عشق را منکر بود      گرچه بنیاید که صاحب سر بود  
زیرک و داناست اما نیست نیست      تا فرشته لا نشد اهریمنی ست  
او بقول و فعل یار ما بود      چون بحکم حال آئی لا بود

"Partial (discursive) reason is a denier of Love, though it may give out that it is a confidant.

"It is clever and knowing, but it is naught (devoid of self-existence); until the angel has become naught, he is an Ahriman (Devil).

"It (partial reason) is our friend in word and deed, (but) when you come to the case of inward feeling (ecstasy), it is naught (of no account)." (i, 1982-1984).

Our ultimate intuition is an intuition of identity that transcends all contradictions and all relations and, therefore, from its very nature it is incapable of stepping into the realm of intellect and speech whose nature is dualistic in the sense that, in order to think at all, we must analyse and compare.<sup>1</sup> That is a drawback rooted in the very nature of intellect. Life in its immediacy can only be lived and felt but not described. Analysis of life is a *post mortem* examination of it. Rūmī who always calls this immediate intuition as '*Ishq*' (considering the connotation which Rūmī attaches to the word, 'Love' is a very inadequate and misleading translation of it) expresses in the following verses a longing for a kind of expression that could unveil the nature of this intuition and at the same time tells us as to why it is not communicable:

پس چه باشد عشق دریائے عدم      در شکسته عقل را آنجا قدم

"Then what is love? The sea of Not-being: then the foot of the intellect is shattered." (iii, 4723).

کاشکے ہستی زبانی داشتے      تا زہستان پردہ ہا برداشتے  
ہرچہ گوئی اے دم ہستی ازاں      پردہ دیگر برو بستی بدان

1. گوہر جان خود ورائے ضد ہاست [The substance of the spirit is itself beyond contraries (vi, 63)].



آفت ادراک آن قال است و حال      خون بخون شستن محال است و محال

“Would that Being had a tongue, that it might remove the veils from existent beings.

“O breath of (phenomenal) existence, whatsoever words thou mayest utter, know that thereby thou hast bound another veil upon it (the mystery).

“That utterance and (that) state (of existence) are the bane of spiritual perception; to wash away blood with blood is absurd, absurd.” (iii, 4725-4727).

The contrast of love and reason (عشق و عقل) is a popular topic in the Sūfī literature. The demands of these two potent factors in the personality of man are felt to be conflicting. This conflict is sometimes expressed as the conflict of law and love (شرع و عشق) and at other times as a contradiction between law and reality (شریعت و حقیقت) and the general tendency in the Sūfī doctrine is to assert the Primacy of Love to Law and Reason. Sometimes the contradiction is maintained in all its sharpness by the bold assertion that Love is lawless and Law is loveless. Love is identified with ecstasy that absorbs all distinctions : fidelity and infidelity, good and bad, right and wrong—in short, all values are drowned in it. In weaker natures this doctrine degenerated into antinomianism against which sobriety and healthy commonsense had to protest. Hujwirī<sup>1</sup> says that truth is a synthesis of both these elements and points to the formula of the Islamic faith : “There is no god except Allah and Muḥammad is His Prophet” (لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله), as an example of this synthesis, the first part as Reality and the second part as Law.

What the Sūfīs really meant to assert was the primacy and immediacy of the one as compared with the other. What they maintained was that the essence of religion is neither identical with law nor with morals, nor with theoretical reason, nor with the outward form of any positive religion. Their view-

1. *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, pp. 139-40.



point was exactly that of Schleiermacher<sup>1</sup> that the essence of religion is neither morals nor theology but a cosmical feeling, an intuition of oneness with the spirit of the Universe. In this respect religion is not immoral or irrational but amoral and non-rational. It does not contradict morals and reason; it is categorically different from them.<sup>2</sup> This indescribable cosmical feeling is exactly the same as the '*Ishq*' of Rūmī. The following quotations from the Mathnavi will verify this statement.

(1) This cosmical feeling has not any particular form as its object :

آنچه معشوق است صورت نیست آن      خواه عشق این جهان خواه آن جهان

"That which is the object of love is not the form, whether it be love for (the things of) this world or yonder world." (ii, 703).

(2) '*Ishq*' cannot be identified with the psycho-physical feeling of pleasure and pain; it is categorically different from them.

دل که او بسته غم و خندیدن است      تو مگو که لائق آن دیدن است

"Do not say that the heart that is bound (conditioned) by (such bodily attributes as) sadness and laughter is worthy of seeing Thee (as Thou really art)." (i, 1791).

1. *Über die Religion Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihrer Verächtern*, Deutsche, Bibleotek, Berlin, pp. 1-27.

2. آن طرف که عشق می افزود درد      بو حنیفه و شافعی درسه نکرد

"In that quarter where love was increasing (my) pain, Bū Hanīfa and Shāfi'ī gave no instruction." (iii, 3832).

مذهب عشق از همه دین ها جداست

"The religion of love is different from all other religions."

خود طواف آنکه او شه بین بود      فوق قهر و لطف و کفر و دین بود

"Verily, the circumambulation performed by him who beholds the king is above wrath and grace and infidelity and religion." (iv, 2697).



عاشقی زیں ہر دو حالت برتر است      بے بہار و بے خزاں سبز و تر است

"Love is higher than these two states of feeling : without spring and without autumn it is (ever) green and fresh." (i, 1794).

از غم و شادی نباشد جوش ما      با خیال و وہم نبود ہوش ما  
حالت دیگر بود کان نادرست      تو مشو منکر کہ حق بس قادرست

"Our emotion is not caused by grief and joy, our consciousness is not related to fancy and imagination.

"There is another state (of consciousness), which is rare : do not thou disbelieve, for God is very mighty." (i, 1803-1804).

(3) This cosmical feeling is the very essence of religion.

کسب دین عشق است و جذب اندرون

A man with this feeling cannot be pronounced irreligious in whatever from he might express his faith.

ہرچہ گوید مرد عاشق بوئے عشق      از دہانش مے جہد در کوئے عشق

"Whatsoever the man in love (with God) speaks, the scent of love is springing from his mouth into the abode of Love." (i, 2882).

ور بگوید کفر آید بوئے دین      آید از گفت شکش بوئے یقین

"And if he speaks infidelity, it has the scent of (the true) religion, and if he speaks doubtfully, his doubt turns to certainty." (i, 2882).

ور بگوید کثر نماید راستی      اے کثری کہ راست را آراستی

"If he speaks falsehood, it seems (like) the truth. O (fine) falsehood that would adorn (even) the truth !" (i, 2886).

Theoretical reason cannot lead to this feeling; one must turn away from logic in order to realise this feeling.

آزمودم عقل دور اندیش را      بعد ازاں دیوانہ ہازم خویش را

"I have tried far-thinking (Providence) intellect ; henceforth I will make myself mad." (ii, 2332).

(4) This feeling consumes away all doubts and



difficulties raised by man's theoretical and practical interests ; it is a source of enlightenment not accessible to reason.

هست عشقش آتش اشکال سوز هر خیالے را بروبد نور روز

"His (God's) love is a fire that consumes difficulties : the daylight sweeps away every phantom." (iii, 1136).

It is the Infinite in man which, dissatisfied with the Finite, doubts it and puts questions to it. Seek the answer there where the question emerges, i.e. in this infinite cosmical feeling.

هم ازاں سوجو جواب اے مرتضیٰ کاین سوال آمد ازاں سو مرترا

"O thou with whom He is pleased, seek the answer from the same quarter from which this question came to thee." (iii, 1137).

تو ازیں سو و ازاں سو چوں گدا اے کُہ معنی چہ ہے جوی صدا

"Why on this side and on that, like a beggar, O mountain of Belief, art thou seeking the echo ?" (iii, 1139).

پوز بند وسوسہ عشق است و بس ورنہ کے وسواس را بسته است کس

"The only muzzle for evil suggestions (of doubt) is Love ; else, when has anyone (ever) stopped (such) temptation ?" (v, 3230).

The identification of '*Ishq*' with this immediate cosmical intuition reveals the real meaning of a number of utterances in the Sūfī literature which otherwise appear to be irresponsible and extravagant. For instance, the following verses attributed to Abu'l Khair<sup>1</sup> must be interpreted in this spirit :

آن را کہ قضا ز خیل عشاق نوشت آزاد ز مسجد است و فارغ ز کنشت  
آن را کہ فنا شیوہ و فقر آئین است نہ کشف و یقین نہ معرفت نہ دین است

"He whom destiny places among the group of lovers becomes free

1. *Abu Sa'id Abu'l Khair*, edited by Mitra, Lahore.  
About the life of Abu'l Khair see R. A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge),



from the mosque and the temple. He whose mode of life is annihilation and *Faqr* (detachment from the world) has neither relation nor belief nor gnosis nor religion."<sup>1</sup>

Rūmī is never tired telling us that this intuition is neither communicable nor teachable. Morality and reason may serve as helps to the realisation of it. He marks it off clearly from science as well as art.

علم آموزی طریقتش قوی است      حرفه آموزی طریقتش فعلی است  
فقر آموزی ز صحبت قائم است

"Science is learnt through words and art is learnt through practice, but *Faqr* is awakened by personal touch."

As a consequence of seeing in this intuition the real purpose of religion, he prefers one moment of it to a thousand years spent sincerely in the service of God.<sup>2</sup> Religion as revealed in forms and dogmas is not identical with this immediate intuition.<sup>3</sup>

1. A comparison of these lines with a quatrain of 'Umar Khayyām shows into what utter Nihilism an exaggeration of this standpoint might lead :

رندے دیدم نشستہ بر روئے زمیں      نہ کفر نہ اسلام نہ دنیا و نہ دین  
نے حق نہ حقیقت نہ شریعت نہ یقین      در هر دو جہاں کرا بود زہرہ این

"I saw a free Sūfī squatting on the ground, who was neither for infidelity nor for Islam, neither for the world nor for religion : truth and reality and law and belief were nothing to him : in the two worlds who is brave like him ?"

2. یک زمانے در حضور اولیا      بہتر از صد سالہ طاعت بے ریا

"A short time (spent) in the company of God's friends is better than sincere religious worship of a hundred years."

3. زان طرف کہ عشق مے افزود درد      بو حنیفہ و شافعی در سے نکرد

"In that quarter where love was increasing (my) pain, Bū Ḥanīfā and Shāfi'ī gave no instruction." (iii, 3832).

خود طواف آنکہ او شہ بین بود      فوق قہر و لطف و کفر و دین بود

"Verily, the circumambulation performed by him who beholds the king is above wrath and grace and infidelity and religion." (iv, 2967).

زان نیامد یک عبارت در جہاں      کہ نہانست و نہانست و نہاں

"Not one word (capable of) expressing it has (ever) come into the



In connection with this problem of the relation of this intuition to reason, Rūmī has interpreted the story of Adam and Satan as given in the Qur'ān. In order to appreciate Rūmī's interpretation, we give a brief sketch of the story.<sup>1</sup>

“The universe and the angels were long in existence before the creation of man. When God proposed to create Adam, He put His proposal before the angels saying that He wished to create a being who should represent Him on the earth and act as His Vicegerent. The angels did not relish the proposal and asserted their purity and superiority and their incessant praise and glorification of Him. They objected to the creation of man because he would be cruel and shed blood on earth. To refute the angels God established the superiority of Adam by giving him the knowledge of all things. They acknowledged their ignorance and the worth of Adam. Having established the dignity of man on the basis of a type of knowledge that the angels did not possess,

world, for it is hidden, hidden, hidden.” (iv, 2968).

The Mathnavī is full of utterances about the superiority of love to law. The Qur'ān emphasised the aspect of law and duty and obedience and the relation of God and man was depicted as the relation of the master to the servant. The Sūfī reaction against orthodoxy expressed itself mainly in this revision of values. Rūmī conceives of duty and service only as a disguise of love :

مطرب عشق این زند وقت سماع      بندگی بند و خداوندی صداع

“At the time of the Samā' Love's minstrel strikes up this (strain) :  
‘Servitude is chains and lordship headache.’ ” (iii, 4722).

بندگی و سلطنت معلوم شد      زین دو پرده عاشقی مکتوم شد

“Servitude and sovereignty are known : loverhood is concealed by these two veils.” (iii, 4724).

1. References to the story in the Qur'an :

Adam created to rule on earth. (ii. 30).

Adam is taught the names of all things. (ii. 31).

Angels ordered to make obeisance to Adam. (ii. 34 ; vii. 11 ; xv. 28 ; xvii. 61 ; xviii. 50 ; xx. 116 ; xxxviii. 72).

Iblīs refuses to make obeisance to Adam. (ii. 34 ; vii. 11 ; xiv. 30 ; xvii. 61 ; xviii. 50 ; xx. 116 ; xxxviii. 73, 74).



they were asked to pay homage to Adam by prostrating themselves before him. All the angels obeyed except Iblīs, the Satan, who refused out of pride looking down upon Adam as a mean creation of clay. For this crime against God and Man, the Satan was cursed. He fell from his dignified position and determined to avenge himself on this new creature and his Creator.

“The Satan misled Adam and Eve into eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. They acknowledged their sin and were forgiven and sent down to live on the Earth. Adam was dignified again, but Satan kept on in his contempt of man and the consequent revolt against God.”

Now, let us turn to Rūmī's interpretation of the story which partly agrees and partly differs from the Biblical narrative. His views may be summed up as follows :

۱. این چنین آدم که نامش می برم گر ستایم تا قیامت قاصریم

“The Adam like this whose name I am celebrating, if I praise (him) till the Resurrection, I fall short (of what is due).” (i, 1248).

بود آدم دیده نور قدیم

“Adam was the eye of the Eternal light.” (ii, 18).

گر بظاهر آن پری پنهان بود آدمی پنهان تر از پریاں بود

“If outwardly, the *peri* is hidden, (yet) Man is a hundred times more hidden than the *peris*.” (iii, 4255).

آدمی نزدیک عاقل چون خفیست چون بود آدم که درغیب اوصفیست

“Since, in the view of the intelligent, Man is hidden, how (hidden) must be the Adam who is pure (chosen of God) in the unseen world !” (iii, 4257).

About the identification of Adam with man in general there is a verse in the Qur'ān which, though not directly alluded to by Rūmī, may have served him as a scriptural basis for his doctrine :

ولقد خلقناکم ثم صورناکم ثم قلنا للملائكة اسجدوا لآدم فسجدوا الا ابليس

“And certainly We created you, then We fashioned you, then We said to the angels : Make obeisance to Adam. So they did obeisance except Iblīs.” (vii 11).



(1) Adam of the Qur'an is symbolical of Humanity<sup>1</sup> in its original Essence; he is the prototype of man.

(2) The knowledge given to Adam<sup>1</sup> which put the angels to shame and established his superiority to them was of an intuitional nature; it had nothing in common with intellectual knowledge or theoretical reason.

(3) In the creation of Adam God breathed His own Spirit into him that was the source of Adam's divinity and dignity and that was the Essence to which angels were asked to pay homage.

(4) Satan, the principle of evil, represents a view of life that is incapable of appreciating the divine dignity of man.<sup>2</sup>

Intellect working by itself is materialistic and realistic and is incapable of realising the eternal value of man. This value lies in the intuition of man's divinity and infinity which the fallen man is always trying to realise and reattain.<sup>3</sup>

Satan is the personification of the realistic intellect while Adam's essence is the love of the Ideal and the Infinite. Then again Rūmī represents Satan

چشم آدم کو بنور پاک دید جان و سر نامہا گشتش پدید 1.

"Inasmuch as the eye of Adam saw by means of the pure light, the soul and in most sense of the names became evident to him."  
(i, 1246).

علم بودش چون نبودش عشق دین او ندید از آدم الا نقش طین 2.  
گرچه دانی دقت علم اے امیں زانت نکشاید دو دیده غیب بین

"He (Iblīs) had knowledge, (but) since he had no religious love, he beheld in Adam nothing but figure of clay. Though you may know (all) the mimitiae of knowledge, O trustworthy (scholar) not by that (means) will your two (inward) eyes that discern the invisible be opened." (vi 260-261).

لیک میداند هر آن کو محرم است زیر کی زابلیس و عشق از آدم است 3.

"He that is blessed and familiar (with spiritual mysteries) knows that intelligence is of Iblīs, while love is of Adam." (iv, 1402).



as a determinist<sup>1</sup> giving a hint that intellect cannot believe in freedom ; freedom lies in the non-intellectual side of man. So Satan is the embodiment of the intellect which is realistic and deterministic, while the intuitional side of man represents him as an ideal and free being.

Thus it is love allied with the sense of freedom that Rūmī conceives as the essence of man. Having seen what Rūmī means by Love, we pass on to the question of Freedom.

1. That the Devil, the embodiment of intellect, is at the same time a personification of Determinism as opposed to Freedom represented by Adam, is very ingeniously based by Rūmī on certain verses of the Qur'ān. Adam as well as Satan committed a sin ; the former admitted having committed it out of his own choice and begged for forgiveness but Satan attributed his own sin to God. Adam and Eve said *إنا ظلمنا أنفسنا* and Satan said (The Qur'ān, vii. 16) :

فما اغويتني لا قعدن لهم صراطك المستقيم -



*FREEDOM OF THE WILL*

EVERY system of philosophy as well as of religion, at one time or other, had to grapple with this problem. The reign of Law and Realm of Logos exclude all chance and choice and, with emphasis on the Unity and Uniformity of the processes of Reason, no place is left for equally possible alternatives. Logic is identical with Necessity and Law excludes all arbitrariness and hence consistent Rationalism has nearly always been an ally of Determinism. Religious consciousness too has led to a similar consequence, though starting from quite different premises. With the Omnipotence and Omniscience of God no place is left for the independent working of a created will. This has always been and perhaps must always remain a dilemma, both sides of which are affirmed by unsophisticated human nature as equally true and necessary. Now let us turn to the history of this problem in Islam.

There can be no doubt as to the fact that Islam was not the first originator of this problem, although, as we shall see later on, the apparently paradoxical teachings of the Qur'ān, in this respect, were the weapons with which this battle was fought among the Muslims. Although even a cursory knowledge of the Qur'ān is sufficient to give rise to this problem from within itself, still some of the well-known European orientalists have asserted, without any historical authority whatsoever, that the problem in Islam was



taken over from the controversies of the Christians.<sup>1</sup> Boer<sup>2</sup> admits that he has no documentary evidence for his assertion and MacDonald<sup>3</sup> adds to his supposition that the "whole subject calls for investigation though the influence of Greek Theology on Islam can hardly be over-estimated." Goldziher<sup>4</sup> bases his guess on the historical coincidence that the Byzantine Christians were engaged in the same problem at the time at which it emerged in Islam. But of all the European scholars so far as this problem is concerned, Becker<sup>5</sup> seems to have approached the truth when he says that the freedom of the will is a problem that could have arisen from within Islam itself, although the literature of Patristik gives us an insight into the way in which the early Muslims debated with the Christians on this problem.

There is hardly any problem that has always so vehemently disturbed the Muslim mind as the problem whether the Omnipotence and Omniscience of God and the predestination of Good and Evil leaves any room for the independence of action and the responsibility of the individual. Qur'an and Hadith lend support to Freedom as well as Necessity. Both these sides were equally represented in the mind of the Prophet. Now, let us first turn to the Qur'an and see how it presents with equal force both sides of the problem. The Qur'an

1. Von Kremer, *Kulturgeschichtliche Streifzüge*.

2. Boer, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, S. 8.

3. MacDonald, *Development of Muslim Theology*, p. 130.

4. Goldziher, *Muh. Studien*, II. S. 382 (für die Uebernahme neutestamentlicher Sprüche und Ideen in die Hadis-Literatur).

5. G. H. Becker, *Islam-Studien* (Leipzig, 1924), I. Bd. S. 432-439. Becker points to the literature of Christian Patristik as a proof of the fact that the Muslims and Christians debated about this problem, and points to the writings of Johannes von Damaskus, whose Arabic name is Manṣūr (749), who was a dogmatist of the Greek Church, and to Theodor Abū Qurra, the earliest of Arabic-writing Christian Church Fathers (between 740 and 820). There is a pamphlet of Abū Qurra on الجبر والاختيار (On Freedom and Necessity). See Graf, *Arabische Schriften des Theodor Abu Kurra* (Paderborn, 1910).

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looks at the relation between the human and the divine will and their interaction along with other occurrences in the world in the following ways that are apparently paradoxical :

(1) God is the Creator of everything—good as well as evil. He creates goodness as well as evil in the human souls and knew beforehand how they would act.

(2) God created everything with goodness and truth and He is not responsible for evil.

(3) God created goodness as well as evil and left man free to choose between Light and Darkness.

(4) God does what He pleases ; He guides aright whom He pleases and He leads astray whom He pleases.

(5) But He guides aright those who believe in Him and do good, and He leads astray and punishes only the evil-doers.

(6) If God had wished, every soul would have believed and done good, but He did not wish it to be so.

(7) Not what man wills, but what God wills, happens.

(8) To every soul belongs only that which it has itself earned.

In order to justify my statement, I quote a few verses of the Qur'ān under the eight headings given above :

ما اصاب من مصيبة في الارض ولا في انفسكم الا في كتاب من قبل ان نبراهها -

“No misfortune can happen on earth or in your souls but is recorded in a decree before We bring it into existence.” (lvii. 22).

ولو شاء الله ما قتلوا ولكن الله يفعل ما يريد -

“If God had so willed, they would not have fought each other ; but God fulfilleth His plan.” (ii. 253).

ولو شئنا لاتينا كل نفس هداها -

“If We had so willed, We could certainly have brought every soul its



true guidance" (xxxii. 13).

ومن لم يجعل الله له نوراً فما له من نور -

"For any to whom God giveth no light, there is no light." (xxiv. 40).

وما خلقنا السماء والارض وما فيها باطلاً - ذالك ظن الذين كفروا -

"Not without purpose did We create heaven and earth and all between ! That were the thoughts of unbelievers !" (xxxviii. 27).

في قلوبهم مرض فزادهم الله مرضا -

"In their hearts is a disease ; and God has increased their disease." (ii. 10).

والله لا يهدي القوم الكافرين -

"And God guideth not those who reject faith." (ii. 264).

والله لا يهدي القوم الظالمين -

"And God guideth not those who are unjust." (ii. 258).

ولكن لعنهم بكفرهم -

"But God hath cursed them for their disbelief." (iv. 46).

فبما نقضهم ميثاقهم لعناهم وجعلنا قلوبهم قاسية -

"But because of their breach of their covenants, We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard." (v. 14).

ان الله لا يغير ما بقوم حتى يغيروا ما بانفسهم -

"Verily never will God change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)." (xiii. 11).

افرايت من اتخذ الله هواه واضله الله على علم و ختم على سمعه و قلبه وجعل على بصره غشاوه -

"Then seest thou such a one as takes as his god his own vain desire ? God has, knowing (him as such), left him astray and sealed his hearing and his heart (understanding), and put a cover on his sight." (xlv. 23).



ولو شاء ربك لامن من في الارض كلهم جميعاً -

"If it had been thy Lord's will, they would all have believed,—all who are on earth !" (x. 99).

فلو شاء الله لجمعهم على الهدى -

"If it were God's will, He could gather them together unto true guidance." (vi. 35).

ولو شئنا لآتينا كل نفس هداها -

"If We had so willed, We could certainly have brought every soul its true guidance." (xxxii. 13).

قل ان الامر كله لله -

"Say thou : 'Indeed, this affair is wholly God's.' " (iii. 154).

ان احسنتم احسنتم لا نفسكم وان آساءتم فلاها -

"If ye did well, ye did well for yourselves ; if ye did evil, (ye did it) against yourselves." (xvii. 7).

لا يكلف الله نفساً الا وسعها - لها ما كسبت و عليها ما اكتسبت -

"On no soul doth God place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns." (ii. 286).

In the face of such diverse statements about one of the most fundamental problems of life and knowledge, the human mind could not wait for the help of Greek Logic or Christian Theology to become conscious of a painful dilemma. The Qur'an had left all the courses open and then the individual inclinations and the exigencies of history bringing about cross contacts with various types of foreign cultures decided in favour of one or the other aspect. The Prophet had laid extraordinary emphasis on faith and the transformation of the will and the intensely energetic and rapidly expanding life of the early Muslims left them little leisure to brood over the paradoxes of their faith. But some individuals began to feel the difficulty in deter-



mining their course of life. Now and then, the Prophet was questioned and in a large number of traditions bearing upon the point the Prophet urged the questioner to action without giving him a theoretical solution of the problem. *فكل ميسر لما خلق له* was followed by *اعملوا* (To every man is easy for what he has been created).<sup>1</sup> There is another often-quoted tradition that an Arab came to the Prophet and asked him whether he could let his camel free trusting in God. He received the reply so characteristic of the Prophet: *اعقل و توكل* (Tie the camel's knee and trust in God!). Afterwards, when the problem was hotly controverted, all the parties either sought the traditions suitable to their thesis or manufactured them. There are many traditions of the Prophet in support of Choice, and a collection of them would not throw more light on the problem. They are reflections of the various aspects of the Qur'ānic teaching on this point. The supporters of compulsion (*jabr*) asserted that the Prophet had said that the believers in free will were like the fire-worshippers.<sup>2</sup>

But on the whole these paradoxes seem neither to have troubled very much the mind of the Prophet nor of his immediate followers. Those imbued with his teaching seem to have been strong men of action and equally staunch fatalists at the same time: a psychologically possible combination. It was much later that Fatalism developed passive and quietistic tendencies. Caliph 'Umar, the man of iron will, is said to have met a class of do-nothing people who called

1. *Iḥyā*, Vol. IV, p. 77 :

لما قيل له يا رسول الله ففيهم العمل اذ كانت الاشياء قد فرغ منها من قبل  
قال اعملوا فكل ميسر لما خلق له (حديث متفق عليه من حديث علي و عمران  
بن حصين) -

حديث : القدرى مجوس -

2. Maḥmūd Shabistrī, in the famous poem, *Gulshan-i-Rāz*, refers to it :

هرآنکس را که مذهب غیر جبر است      نبی فرمود کو مانند گبر است



themselves المتوكلون (resigned to the will of God); he disapproved of their false conception of resignation and advised them first to sow their seed and then trust in God.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, it is said that 'Alī was questioned as to whether man is free or determined. He asked the man to raise one of his feet from the earth, and the man did it, and then he ordered him to raise the other one too at the same time. That was naturally impossible. 'Alī said, "You were free to raise one foot but you are not free to raise both; you are free and you are not free at the same time." This reply is in the spirit of the often-quoted formula: الإيمان بين الجبر والاختيار.

During this early period there was no sharp split on this basis, but with the development of ideas it was inevitable. We see a class of Muslims separating themselves into the two schools of *Qadariyya* and *Jabariyya*, the former affirming man's responsibility for his actions and the latter denying it. Under different names these schools have never ceased to exist.

Mu'tazilites, called the rationalists of Islam, became the supporters of the Justice and Unity of God and called themselves اصحاب العدل والتوحيد (the people of Unity and Justice); and as a corollary from the justice and rationality of God they believed in man's responsibility for his actions; otherwise, how could he be rewarded or punished by a just God if he were not free to choose between good and evil? In this respect Mu'tazilites were the successors of the *Qadariyya*.

After them came the orthodox reaction in the form of the school called Ash'arites<sup>2</sup> named after

1. J. Goldziher, *Materialien zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Sufismus*, quotes Ibn Maskawaih:

لقى عمر ابن الخطاب رضا ناساً يشمهبون صوفية زماننا فقال من انتم فقالوا نحن المتوكلون قال بل انتم مستاكلون الا اجركم بالمتوكلين من القى حبه في بطن الارض وتوكل على ربه -

2. For a summary of the Ash'arite doctrine, see *Iḥyā*, Kitāb qawā'id al-'aqā'id, p. 79.



its founder Abu'l Hasan Ash'arī. They formulated the rigid metaphysical and doctrinal system that underlies the creed of the Muslims even at the present time. They denied Causation and Uniformity of the laws of Nature, not in order to defend the freedom of the human will, but to support the arbitrariness of God. They maintained that God could not be bound by any laws; that was an encroachment on His Omnipotence. In reply to the question: "Why should man be punished for actions that were predestined and over which he had no control?" they brought forward their doctrine of *Kasb* (acquisition). Ghazālī, who was otherwise too great a man to belong to any of these schools of theology or philosophy and in many questions openly opposed the Ash'arite view, is still one of the strongest supporters and exponents of the doctrine of *Kasb*.<sup>1</sup>

Let us examine a little closely this ingenious attempt on the part of this school to synthesise Determinism with man's responsibility of his actions. This was closely connected with Ghazālī's view of Causation and of Being.<sup>2</sup> For him, existence as well as power belongs only to God; He is the only Substance' (*Jawhar*), because He only exists by Himself. He is not only the First Cause; He is really the Only Cause. As opposed to many extreme Ash'arites, he believed in a necessary sequence of phenomena in Nature; in his own words, 'nothing can happen unless the conditions necessary for its happening precede it.' In spite of this, he would not call the preceding phenomena the cause of the succeeding ones. There is a necessary sequence in the unfolding of phenomena that realises an Eternal Predestined Purpose; the First as well as the Final Cause is the only Cause and one phenomenon

1. *Kasb* in connection with the Ash'arite doctrine of *Jabr* and *Ikhtiyār* should not be confused with *Kasb* as opposed to *Tawakkul* for which see in this Chapter *Kasb* and *Tawakkul*.

2. *Iḥyā*, Chapter on *shukr* (Thanksgiving), p. 77.

3. Exactly the position later on held by Spinoza.



cannot be called the Cause of another phenomenon.

In dealing with *shukr* (thanksgiving) and *al-tawhīd wal-tawakkul* (Unity of God and Trust in Him), he has given us his philosophy in a nutshell; his views on Being, Substance, Causality and Freedom of the will. Here he appears as an outspoken Pantheist and a reasoned supporter of the Sūfī formula: Nothing exists except God; nothing is effective except God. In exposition of the Ḥadīth *اعملوا فكل ميسر لما خلق له* he says:

فتبين ان الخلق مجارى قدرة الله تعالى و محل افعاله وان كانوا هم ايضاً من افعاله ولكن بعض افعاله محل للبعض و قوله اعملوا او ان كان جارياً على لسان الرسول صلعم فهو فعل من افعاله و هو سبب لعلم الخلق ان العمل نافع وعلمهم فعل من افعال الله تعالى والعلم سبب لانبعاث داعية جازمة الى الحركة والطاعة وانبعاث الداعية ايضاً من افعال الله تعالى و هو سبب لحركة الاعضاء و هي ايضاً من افعال الله تعالى ولكن بعض افعاله سبب لبعض اى الاول شرط للثاني<sup>1</sup> -

"It is clear that the creature is only a subject or a 'locus' (or a stage) on which the divine action is performed, though the creature (even in this capacity of being only a passive locus) is itself a product of a divine act; but some divine acts become loci on which other divine acts are performed. The Prophet's utterance of the word 'act' is itself a divine action which becomes the cause of 'being known to the creatures that acting is useful.' But the knowing of the people is itself a divine act which causes in its turn the determination of the will to move and to obey. This willing too is a divine act which becomes the cause of the movement of the limbs which again is one of the actions of God, but some of His actions are the cause of others, i.e. the first as the condition of the occurrence of the second, as the creation of the body is a necessary preceding condition for the existence of its attribute (extension) and the attribute cannot be created before the body. So the creation of life is a condition for the creation of knowledge and the creation of knowledge is a condition for the creation of will. But all of these are the acts of God, some of them being the cause (i.e. condition) for the others. Being a condition means only this that a substance must precede the action of life on it and knowledge can be received only by a living entity and the will can arise only in a knowing being. It is only in this sense that one thing is the cause of the other; not that one cause creates another, but it only supplies a necessary condition for the occurrence of the other."

1. *Iḥyā*, Chapter on *shukr*, p. 77.



And this truth when realised leads to the stage of Unity.

Having plunged into this Unity, the question of the responsibility of man for his actions and the justice of God in rewarding and punishing them troubles him. His Pantheism is logical and clear but his defence of man's responsibility and God's justice makes him a sophistical juggler which sometimes makes it difficult for the reader to believe that Ghazālī could himself have been convinced by the arguments and the examples that he brings forward in his support. We have, for instance, noted in the above passage that according to him all actions in reality ensue from God, but in spite of it man is responsible for these actions of God because he is the object or the Ground or the Locus on which they take place. Man being the locus (*maḥal*) of them, he is responsible, because God realised certain of His purposes through him. When we further inquire if man's being (*maḥal*) is due to his own free choice, Ghazālī replies frankly: "That too is an act of God." He makes no secret of his belief in unqualified predestination:

والله تعالى مسبب الاسباب و مرتبها فمن سبق له في الازل السعادة يسر له هذا لاسباب حتى يقوده بسلسلتها الى الجنة - فالمتقون يساقون الى الجنة قهراً والمجرمون يقادون الى النار قهراً ولا قاهر الا الله الواحد القهار ولا قادر الا الملك الجبار -

God is the central or the first link from which all the iron chains of necessary causation proceed and drag one to the paradise and the other to the hell. Man does not proceed himself but is everywhere dragged.

In discussing the problem of Unity and Trust, he is again plunged into the same difficulty and tries in vain to extricate himself out of it by a psychological analysis of Choice. In every case what his arguments really lead to is not man's capacity of Choice and his responsibility but to pure and simple Predestination



and Determinism. Desires are created in man without his Choice; he cannot help desiring and desires automatically and irresistibly put his powers into appropriate motion. He says that the whole is a chain of necessity.<sup>1</sup>

Then he proceeds to classify all actions ensuing from man into three classes: *ṭaba'ī* (natural), *irādī* (volitional), *ikhtiyārī* (selectional). His basis of classification would not have been clear, if he had not illustrated it by examples. When a man stands in water, his body cleaves the water; that is a natural action. When he breathes with his lungs, his will participates in it and hence it may be termed volitional. When he writes with his hand, it is an act of Choice and may be termed selectional. Now in the act of nature, Necessity is quite obvious. The act of breathing or other reflex actions like the automatic closing of the eye, when somebody is going to attack it with a needle, can also be referred to uncontrollable natural processes and therefore Ghazālī says about them: *فقدالتحق هذا بالفعل الطبيعي في كونه ضرورياً*.

Now the third kind in which man writes with his hands appears to be an act of Choice and might lead to a belief that the writer does it or does not do it according to his sweet will. But this is due to crass ignorance. The will to choose is not independent but depends upon knowledge. It is knowledge which examines the various alternatives and weighs the pros and cons and then, according to the decision, the will puts the powers into motion. Now there are matters in which knowledge decides promptly and the will acts simultaneously as in the reflex action of closing the eye at the approach of a harmful body, and there are matters in which it takes some time before knowledge

1. *Iḥyā*, Vol. IV, p. 219:

فان قلت هذا جبر محض والجبر ينقض الاختيار وانت لا تنكر الاختيار فكيف يكون مجبوراً مختاراً فاقول لو انكشف الغطاء لعرفت انه في عين الاختيار مجبور -



gives its final verdict as to which of the alternatives would be beneficial. The will has then only to obey the decision.

سميت هذا لارادة اختيارا مشتقاً من الخير اى هوانبعثت الى منظر للعقل  
انه خير -

Ghazālī gives here an etymological justification of his psychology. In this way the whole matter is shifted from will to knowledge. Now the question would arise whether man is free in the decisions of his knowledge. Ghazālī has not gone deeply into the examination of the personal element in knowledge. He silently takes reason as something impersonal. So the whole movement starts from an impersonal element and by a series of necessary steps ends in an action. But what is the role of the person in whom this drama is enacted? Ghazālī's reply is that he is only the stage and the only actor on the stage is God.

The act of nature is pure necessity and the act of God is pure free choice (though not like human choice that vacillates between Alternatives) and the action of man is a synthesis of the two—it is a necessary or compulsory choice. Nature cannot choose at all, God is free to choose, while man is compelled to choose.

This is the most reasoned exposition of the Ash'arite doctrine of *Kasb* from the pen of one of its greatest expounders. It is Determinism pure and simple in which neither personality nor individuality has a place; man here is either an inert stage or a passive spectator; actor surely he is not. He is only *maḥal* (locus) and *mujrī* (channel). In order to save man's moral sense and responsibility, it was attempted with an obvious sophistry by introducing the words *kasb* and *ikhtiyār* to convince him of his personal share in the matter. The frank and open assertion of Free-will by the Qadariyya and Mu'tazilites and equally frank admission of compulsion on the part of some



of the theologians and mystics of Islam appear to be healthy and honest as compared with the poor attempt at their synthesis in the way it has been attempted by Ash'arites in general. For an open avowal of Determinism, note the following lines from one of the most famous exponents of pantheistic Sūfism :

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>ازاں گوئی چوشیطان همچو من کیست<br/>تن من مرکب و جانم سوار است<br/>همه تکلیف بر من زان نهادند<br/>همه این آفت و شومی زهستی ست<br/>کسے را کو بود در ذات باطل<br/>نگوئی اختیارت از کجا بود<br/>بذات خویش نیک و بد نباشد<br/>نبی فرمود کو مانند گبر است<br/>همین نادان احمق ما و من گفت<br/>نسب خود در طریقت لہو و بازی ست<br/>ترا از بہر کارے برگزیدند<sup>1</sup></p> | <p>تعینہائے عالم بر تو طاریست<br/>ازاں گوئی مرا خود اختیار است<br/>زمام تن بدمت جان نهادند<br/>ندان کیں رہ آتش پرستی ست<br/>کدامیں اختیار اے مرد عاقل<br/>چو بود تست یکسر همچو نابود<br/>کسے کو را وجود از خود نباشد<br/>ہر آنکس را کہ مذهب غیر جبر است<br/>چنان کان گبر یزدان و اہرمن گفت<br/>بما افعال را نسبت مجازی ست<br/>نبودی تو کہ فعالت آفریدند</p> |
|--|---|

"You are subject to the modes of the Universe (phenomenal determinations of Being) and therefore you assert like Satan—Who is like me?—and say I am free to choose and my sipirit rides (controls) my body. Because the reins of the body are put in my grasp I am made subject to duty. You do not know that this in the way of Zoroastrianism (i.e. the assertion of two independent principles); this evil and vain boast is caused by the assertion of thy individual existence. O wise man, how can choice be attributed to him whose existence is a Nothing? When your existence is like non-existence, wherefrom did you get your choice? He who does not exist through himself, the good and the evil do not proceed from him. The Prophet said: 'He whose religion is not Compulsion, is like a fire-worshipper.' As he believes in two independent principles, Yazdan and Ahrman, so this fool too asserts the independence of his Ego. The relation of actions to ourselves is only metaphorical (hence unreal); in the Path (of Sūfism) the idea of relation itself is an idle sport. You were not there when Destiny created your action; it was for some (predestined) purpose that you were chosen (to do it)."

1. Maḥmūd Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i-Rāz*. The probable date of the composition of *Gulshan-i-Rāz* is 1317. It was first edited in Europe by Purgstall (Leipzig, 1838). This edition is full of mistakes. Whinfield's edition is substantially correct.



We are now in a position to appreciate and understand Rūmī's conception of man's freedom to be an architect of his own fate. His arguments, as we shall presently see, cover the entire field of the problem and as he has dealt with it in the form of dialogues between parties holding the opposite views, the arguments of both sides are presented to us with a force characteristic of this form of presentation.

(1) In the creation of God only man is endowed with freedom of choice. It is only this endowment which makes him the paragon of creation. All work and service derives its value from this freedom. 'Freedom of will is the salt of service.' There is neither reward nor punishment for the heavenly spheres moving under compulsion.<sup>1</sup> The Grace of God bestowed on man is in accordance with his effort.<sup>2</sup>

(2) All things and situations in the world can be divided into those alterable and unalterable. Man is determined so far as the unalterable side is concerned, but he is free to alter the alterable. In a dialogue between the prophets and the infidels, Rūmī puts into the mouth of the prophets this argument which corresponds with commonsense as well as the scientific experience of man. The infidels say,<sup>3</sup> "We are so constituted that no amount of preaching can

1. اختیار آمد عبادت را نمک      ورنه مے گردد بنا خواه این فلک  
گردش او را نه اجرو نے عتاب      کا اختیار آمد هنر وقت حساب

"Choice (freewill) is the salt of devotion ; otherwise (there would be no merit) : this celestial sphere revolves involuntarily ; (thence) its revolution has neither reward nor punishment, for freewill is (accounted) a merit at the time of Reckoning." (iii, 3287-3288).

2. قدر همت باشد آن جهد و دعا      لیس للانسان الا ما سعی

"That (devotional) work and prayer is in proportion to the (worshipper's) aspiration : Man hath nothing but what he hath striven after." (iv, 2912).

3. قوم گفتند اے نصوحان بس بود      آنچه گفتید ار دریں ده کس بود  
قفل بر دلہائے ما بشہاد حق      کس نداند برد بر خالق سبق  
نقش ما این کرد آن تصویر گر      این نخواهد شد بگفت و گو دگر

"The people said, 'O admonishers, what ye have said is enough, if



alter us ; the leopard cannot change his spots. The earth cannot become water and water cannot develop properties of honey." The prophets admit that anything cannot be transformed into anything, but man's moral self is a remediable disease.

(3) Predestination is true so far as the 'Laws of God' are concerned. Individual choice is not predestined. The form of Law is eternal ; its content is free and variable. In this compromise between law and freedom, we find one of the most convincing and rational conceptions in the philosophy of religion. It is the very essence of the conception of law that it is eternal and unchangeable. The Laws of Nature hold good for all time and, therefore, metaphysically expressed, they are 'out of time,' and, theologically expressed, they are 'predestined.' Hence the free building of character itself requires the uniformity and inalterability of moral causation. The Pen of

there be anyone in this village. God hath set a lock upon our hearts ; none can prevail against the Creator. That Artist made the picture of us to be this : this will not be altered by talking." (iii, 2900-2902).

خاک را گوئی صفت آب گیر      آب را گوئی غسل شو یا که شیر

"You may tell earth to assume the qualities of water, you may tell water to become honey or milk." (iii, 2904).

انبیاء گفتند آری آفرید      وصفهائے که نتاں زان سر کشید  
آفرید او وصفهائے عارضی      که کسی مبعوض می گردد رضی

"The prophets said, 'Yes : He hath created some qualities from which it is impossible to withdraw one's self. And He hath (also) created qualities (which are only) accidental, so that a hated person becomes acceptable.' " (iii, 2909-2910).

ریگ را گوئی که گل شو عاجز است      خاک را گوئی که گل شو جائز است

"If you bid sand become clay, it is incapable (of doing so) ; (but) if you bid earth become clay, that is possible." (iii, 2912).

بلکه اغلب رنجها را چاره است      چون یجد جوئی بیاید آن بدست

"Nay, most maladies have a cure : when you seek in earnest, it will come to hand" (iii, 2916).

For a discussion on freewill see, v. 2963 seq.



Destiny<sup>1</sup> has written once for all that every action shall have a reaction corresponding to it. If you choose a crooked path, the inexorable law of Destiny would lead you into error. Truth as well as error are governed by law ; the pen of Destiny did not move by an arbitrary will. Good and evil are predestined to have consequences corresponding to them. That the thief shall be punished and that wine shall cause intoxication, are laws predestined. In the scale of Destiny actions are weighed exact to an atom. The will of God is not unjust and irrational. A king before whom the honest and the dishonest have the same rank is not a king but a tyrant.

(4) Man does not deliberate between impossible alternatives ; he ponders over alternatives that are equally open to him. His deliberation is a proof of his freedom. 'Ought' and 'can' are correlatives. The

۱- قد جف القلم یعنی جف القلم و کتب لا یتوی و الطاعة المعصية لا یتوی الا لمانه و السرقة جف القلم ان لا یتوی الشکر و الکفران جف القلم ان الله لا یضیع اجر المحسنين -

"And similarly (the Tradition) 'the Pen has dried' means that the pen has dried after writing (the words), 'Obedience and disobedience to God are not on the same level, honesty and stealing are not on the same level.' The Pen has dried (after writing) that thanksgiving and ingratitude are not on the same level. The Pen has dried (after writing) that 'God does not let the reward of the righteous be lost' " (Qur'ān, ix. 121).

همچنین تاویل قد جف القلم  
پس قلم بنوشت که هر کار را  
کثر روی جف القلم کثر آیدت  
بهر تحریض است بر شغل اهم  
لائق آن هست تاثیر و جزا  
راستی آری سعادت زایدت

"Likewise the (true) interpretation of 'the Pen has dried' (is that) it (this Tradition) is for the purpose of inciting to the most important work (of all).

"Therefore the Pen wrote that every action has the effect and consequence appropriate to it.

"The Pen has dried (after writing) that if you do wrong (in this world) you will suffer wrong (in the next), and if you act rightly (here), the result will be your felicity there." (v, 3131-3133).

ذره گر جهد تو افزون بود در ترازوئے خدا موزون بود

"If your (devotional) labour exceed (that of another) by a single mote, it (that mote) will be weighed in God's balance." (v, 3145).



fact that man distinguishes between possible and impossible alternatives is a proof of his capacity in the former and his incapacity in the latter. "He deliberates whether he should go to Mosul or remain in Baghdad, but not whether he should walk or fly." (After the discovery of the airship the impossible alternative of Rūmī is becoming an object of choice.)

(5) Everything is controlled by influences outside of it. Man alone carries his star, his principle of life, within himself. No earthly or heavenly influence can determine man's course of action, unless that indefinable 'Something,' the core of his character, that is within him, responds to that which affects him from outside.<sup>1</sup>

(6) Injunctions and prohibitions, praise, blame and reward and punishment would be sheer mockery, if the doer of an action had not been free to choose.<sup>2</sup>

(7) Struggling and striving does not mean striking one's head against fate, because it is the very fate of man to struggle. Struggling against Destiny is the very destiny of man.<sup>3</sup> In this very struggle his hidden, unrealised potentialities are actualised.

Here Rūmī seems to have anticipated the central conception of Fichte's Ethical Monism, that the resistance offered by that which, phenomenally considered, is called the non-ego has its source in the nature of the ego itself, which can develop only through perpetual overcoming of resistance. That which was called by the Qur'an God's trial of man through mis-

1. هر کرا با اخترے پیوستگی ست      مرد را با اختر خود هم تگی ست

"Bidding and forbidding; wrath, favour and punishment—are all asserted of a free individual, O my friend."

2. امر و نهی و خشم و تشریف و عتیب      نیست جز مختار را اے پاک حبیب

"Everything is determined by a star (i.e. cause) outside it; but man is determined by a star within himself."

3. با قضا پنجه زدن نبود جهاد      زانکه این را هم قضا بر ما نهاد

"Endeavour is not a struggle with Destiny, because Destiny itself has laid this (endeavour) upon us." (i, 976).



fortunes was interpreted by Rūmī into this magnificent doctrine of evil and resistance as the means of actualising the possibilities of the human mind.<sup>1</sup> Only resistance brings into existence new faculties. This is the very destiny of man which, far from contradicting his freedom, is the very means of its development.

(8) But freedom is not an end in itself<sup>2</sup>; the end of all freedom is to determine freely to live according to your higher self. So the end of all freedom is self-determination on a higher plane. At the end freedom and determination are synthesised. Life starts with determinism at the lower plane, develops to the capacity of free choice in man in order to rise to a higher determinism again, where man makes a free offer of his freedom. So determinism is of two kinds, forced compulsion and free compulsion; the latter is self-limitation for the love of the ideal. So long as man is compelled to choose a course, pushed and pulled either by a nature outside of him or by duty imposed on him from outside, he is not free. But spontaneous, self-imposed compulsion resulting from

1. حق تعالیٰ گرم و سرد و رنج و درد      بر تن ما می نهد اے شیر مرد  
خوف و جوع و نقص اموال و بدن      جملہ بہر نقد جان ظاہر شدن

"The High God lays upon our body, O man of fortitude, heat and cold and grief and pain,

"Fear and hunger and impairment of wealth and body—all for the sake of the soul's coin being brought into sight (and use)." (ii, 2963-2964).

2. جہد کن کز جام حق یابی نوی      بے خود و بے اختیار آنکہ شوی  
آنکہ آن سے را بود کل اختیار      تو شوی معذور و مطلق مست وار  
ہرچہ کو بی گفتہ می باشد آن      ہرچہ رو بی رفتہ می باشد آن

"Endeavour to gain freshness (spiritual grace) from God's cup (of love): then you will become selfless and volitionless.

"Then all volition will belong to that wine, and you will be absolutely excusable like a drunken man.

"Whatsoever you beat will (then) be beaten by the wine, whatsoever you sweep away will (then) be swept away by the wine." (v, 3105-3107).



love is of quite a different nature. How determinism of the former kind can be transmuted by the alchemy of love is a matter more of experience than of theory. So<sup>1</sup> freedom for the sake of freedom is not the goal of man's moral and spiritual development.

بنده آزادی طمع دارد زحد عاشق آزادی نخواهد تا ابد

"It is only the slave who longs for freedom, the lover never craves for it."

Man is endowed with freedom only in the end to offer himself freely to the higher necessity of his real self. But this transformation is not possible by any categorical imperative; it is solely the work of love.

Our wills are ours, we know not how,

Our wills are ours to make them Thine!—

—Tennyson

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1. وانکه عاشق نیست حبس جبر کرد<br/>این تجلی مه است این ابر نیست<br/>جبر آن اماره خود کامه نیست<br/>که خدا بکشد شان در دل بصر<br/>قطرها اندر صدفها گوهر است<br/>چون رود در ناف مشکے چون شود<br/>چون دریشان رفت شد نور جلال<br/>در تن مردم شود او روح شاد</p> | <p>لفظ جبرم عشق را بے صبر کرد<br/>این معیت با حق است و جبر نیست<br/>ور بود این جبر جبر عامه نیست<br/>جبر را ایشان شناسند اے پسر<br/>اختیار و جبر ایشان دیگر است<br/>تو مگو کیں مایه پیروں خون بود<br/>اختیار و جبر در تو بد خیال<br/>زان چو در سفره است آن باشد جهاد</p> |
|--|--|

"The word 'Determinism' makes love impatient; only he who is not a lover feels determinism as a prison. The (higher) determinism is association with God (contact with the Truth) and is not external compulsion; this is the effulgence of the Moon (of Truth) and not a cloud. Even if it is compulsion, it is not of the common type; it is not the compulsion of the lower egoistic self of man that 'commands' us to do evil. The nature of higher compulsion is recognised only by those in whom God has opened an 'inward eye.' At this plane their compulsion and freedom are transformed and drops of liquid are turned into pearls in an oyster. Do not question how blood is turned into musk or base metal turned into gold. For you freedom and necessity are two (contradictory) thoughts; entering the souls of the lovers they are synthesised into pure Light. A piece of bread so long as it is on the table is only bread, but assimilation into the life of the organism turns it into life." (i, 1463-1474).



Closely allied with the problem of free will is the question of *tawakkul*<sup>1</sup> (trustful renunciation). Like the problem of free will, the question of renunciation also arose out of the Qur'an. In various places the scripture praises those who have absolute trust in God and rely on Him entirely even for their daily bread. The following verses of the Qur'an recommend this attitude of mind in emphatic terms :

وعلى الله فتوكلوا ان كنتم مؤمنين -

"And rely upon God if you are believers."

وعلى الله فليتوكل المتوكلون -

"And let the reliers rely upon God."

ومن يتوكل على الله فهو حسبه -

"And for him who relies upon God, He is sufficient for him."

ان الله يحب المتوكلين -

"God loves those who rely upon Him."

فابتغوا عند الله الرزق واعيدوه -

"Seek your livelihood from God and serve Him."

There are some traditions of the Prophet too to the same effect :

لو انتم تتوكلون على الله حق توكله لرزقكم كما يرزق الطير تغدو خفاصاً  
وتروح بطاناً<sup>2</sup> -

"If you trust in God as one ought to, God will give you livelihood as He gives to the birds who get up hungry in the morning and are full in the evening."

1. Goldziher, *Materialien zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Sufismus*, has emphasised it as one of the fundamental elements in Sūfism.

2. كل المقامات لها وجه وقفاً غيوالتوكل فانه وجه بلا قفاً - حديث ترمذى  
و حاكم بروايت بخارى ومسلم - عمر فاروق -



من انقطع الى الله عزوجل كفاه الله تعالى كل مودة و رزقه من حيث لا يحتسب  
ومن انقطع الى الدنيا وكله الله اليها -

"He who devotes himself entirely to God, the Mighty and Glorious, He saves him from all trouble and gives him livelihood from a source unknown to him; and he who devotes himself entirely to the world, God entrusts him to the world."

But side by side with this there is a large number of traditions emphasising the value of work. The life of the Prophet himself was an example of incessant and manysided activity. With all his trust in God, he never neglected to search for and employ the means necessary for the ends that he had to realise. In spite of paying a tribute of praise to the godly life of the Christian monks, the Qur'an did not recommend it and the Prophet is reported to have expressly forbidden monkery.

There is another saying of the Prophet where he called the earner of daily bread as the beloved of God.<sup>1</sup>

The Muslims seem to have always felt it as a dilemma. Entire trust in God seemed to require an absolutely passive attitude in life; the seeking of means (*asbāb*) to satisfy the needs of life being considered as a violation of that trust. So in a series of Muslim writers we see the dilemma repeated in the following words:

من طعن على التكسب طعن على السنة<sup>2</sup> و من طعن في ترك التكسب فقد طعن  
على التوحيد -

1. الكاسب حبيب الله.

2. There is a famous tradition of the Prophet in which he replies to the question of an Arab about letting his camel free trusting in God. The Prophet said: *إعقل و توكل* [Tie the camel's knee and trust in God]. Rūmī is an upholder of this attitude:

|                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| گفت آری گر توکل رهبر است | این سبب هم سنت پیغمبر است  |
| گفت پیغمبر باواز بلند    | با توکل زانوئے آستر به بند |
| رمز الکاسب حبيب الله شنو | از توکل در سبب کاهل مشو    |



and Ghazālī expresses the difficulty in the following words :

(التوكل) وهو في نفسه غامض من حيث العلم ثم هو شاق من حيث العمل  
ووجه غموضه من حيث الفهم ان ملاحظة الاسباب والاعتقاد عليها شرک في  
التوحيد والتشاقل عنها بالكلية طعن في السنة و قدح في الشرح -

He says, the synthesis of the Unity of God (considering Him to be the only cause in existence) with the law promulgated by the Prophet and the active searching of means to an end recommended by him is one of the subtlest problems of thought and action. Only those whose souls have been enlightened by God know the truth about it. We have the same dilemma in the utterance of Sahl Tustarī :

هر که طعن کند در کسب در سنت طعن کرده است و هر که در توکل  
طعن کند در ایمان طعن کرده است -

"Whoever objects to the earning of livelihood objects to the *sunna* ;  
whoever objects to *tawakkuls* objects to *īmān* (faith in God)".

Even Suhrawardī quotes him in this respect :

كل المقامات لها وجه وقفاً غير التوكل فانه وجه بلا قفأ -

Over-emphasis on trust and passivity and the quiet-

" 'Yes,' he said : '(but) if trust in God is the (true) guide, (yet use of) the means too is the Prophet's rule (*Sunna*).'

"The Prophet said with a loud voice, 'While trusting in God bind the knee of thy camel.'

"Hearken to the signification of 'The earner (worker) is beloved of God' : through trusting in God, do not become neglectful as to the (ways and) means." (I, 912-914).

سعی شکر نعمتش قدرت بود جبر تو انکار آن نعمت بود

"Freewill is the endeavour to thank (God) for His beneficence : your necessitarianism is the denial of that beneficence." (i, 938).

گر توکل می کنی در کار کن کشت کن پس تکیه بر جبار کن

"If you are putting trust in God, put trust (in Him) as regards (your) work : sow (the seed), then rely upon the Almighty." (i, 947).



ism consequent upon it were one of the fundamental features of a class of Sūfism.<sup>1</sup> Sūfism started with the fear of offending God and developed the habit of morbid self-examination. As the contact with the world offered temptations and chances of falling into sin and incurring the wrath of God at every step, the best way therefore of cutting the Gordian knot was to cut oneself away from the world altogether. The whole spirit and teaching of Islam was against this kind of asceticism. It had offered a synthesis of the two worlds and had made lawful the enjoyment of all the goods of this world only if men keep within certain limits necessary for personal and social well-being.

It had prohibited monkery and enjoined married life on all grown-up healthy individuals. The sayings of the Prophet resound with the praises of the honest worker of wages. The staunchest believers of *tawakkul* could not close their eyes to these facts and therefore always admitted that

هر که طعن کند در کسب در سنت طعن کرده است -

“Whoever objects to the earning of livelihood objects to the Sunna”.

All religious law was based on the presupposition that the individual was a citizen, a member of a social and political organisation.

In the face of these incontrovertible historical facts the question arises: How did the “weltbejahende Religion” of Islam afford a basis to the Sūfīs for their

1. Some Sūfīs were quietists but others were honest wage-earners. Somebody said to Sahl that such and such ascetic Sūfī from the Mountain Lukām has sent you his greeting, in reply to which he said (*Tadhkirat-u'l-Awliya*, p. 262) :

او در کوه ساکن شده است پس کارے نباشد - مرد باید که در میان بازار  
بحق مشغول شود -

“He has retired to mountains and therefore has nothing to do. A man should live amidst people and still be busy with God.”



asceticism and quietism? The answer to this should be sought in two directions. Firstly, we should note the fact that Sūfism in its diverse forms and varied aspects was nothing but the exaggerated and one-sided emphasis on certain doctrines of Islam. For instance, take the attitude of Islam towards the world. It taught that the world was real, created in truth, teleological, flawless and rational. It is not the vain product of blind forces.<sup>1</sup> But then again there are many verses speaking of the world as a house of deception and vanities and the realm of life is really the next world. But this really was not a contradiction because in nearly every religious literature "the world" stands for so many different conceptions. One may look upon the world as real and beautiful and the life in it worth living, but one may still hate "the worldly man." So what Islam really meant to praise was the world of God and the world with God and what it denounced was the world and life without God.<sup>2</sup> But the ascetics and Sūfīs of Islam considered

1- ربنا ما خلقت هذا باطلا -

"Our Lord! not for naught hast Thou created all this" (iii. 191).

و هو الذى خلقت السموات والارض بالحق -

"It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in true (proportions)" (vi. 73).

وما خلقنا السماء والارض وما بينهما لعبين -

"Not for (idle) sport did We create the heavens and the earth and all that is between!" (xxi. 16).

ما ترى فى خلق الرحمن من تفاوت فارجع البصر هل ترى من فطور - ثم ارجع

البصر كرتين ينقلب اليك البصر خاسئاً وهو حسير -

"Wilt thou see in the creation of (God) Most Gracious? So turn thy vision again: seest thou any flaw? Again turn thy vision a second time; (thy) vision will come back to thee dull and discomfited, in a state worn out" (lxvii. 3-4).

2- وما هذه الحيوة الدنيا الا لهو ولعب و ان الدار الآخرة لسهى الحيوان لو

كانو يعلمون -

"What is the life of this world but amusement and play. But verily the Home in the Hereafter,—that is life indeed, if they but knew" (xxix. 64).



the world and God as two irreconcilable contradictories and turned their backs to the world in its entirety. Joining to this their belief in the omniscient Providence of God for which, like everything else, they could find a basis in the Qur'an, some of them became doing nothing dreamers.

The second important influence that strengthened this flight from the world was the influence of Christian monkery. Muhammad had paid a tribute to their godliness but forbidden their mode of life.<sup>1</sup> With the development of the ascetic spirit in Islam

Rumī's interpretation is consistent with the spirit of the Qur'an :

چیست دنیا از خدا غافل بدن      نے قماش و نقرہ و میزان و زن  
مال را گر بہر دین باشی حمل      نعم مال صالح خواندش رسول  
آب در کشتی ہلاک کشتی است      آب اندر زیر کشتی ہشتی است

"What is this world? To be forgetful of God; it is not merchandise and silver and weighing-scales and women.

"As regards the wealth that you carry for religion's sake, 'How good is righteous wealth (for the righteous man)!' as the Prophet recited.

"Water in the boat is the ruin of the boat, (but) water underneath the boat is a support." (i, 983-985).

۱- ولتجدن اقربہم مودة للذين آمنوا الذين قالوا انا نصري - ذالک بان منهم قسيسين و رهبانا وانہم لا يستکبرون -

"And nearest among them in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say, 'We are Christians': because among these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant" (v. 85).

ثم قفینا علی آثارہم برسلنا وقفینا بعیسی ابن مریم و آتیناہ الانجیل وجعلنا فی قلوب الذین اتبعوہ رافۃ ورحمة و رهبانیۃ ابتدعوہا ما کتبنا علیہم الا ابتغاء رضوان اللہ فما رعوہا حق رعایتہا -

"Then, in their wake, We followed them up with (others of) Our apostles: We sent after them Jesus the son of Mary, and bestowed on him the Gospel; and We ordained in the hearts of those who followed him Compassion and Mercy. But the Monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them: (We commanded) only the seeking for the Good Pleasure of God, but that they did not foster as they should have done" (lvii. 27).



they forgot these injunctions and prohibitions and where they could not find a basis in the Qur'ān or Hadīth for their anti-Islamic creed they helped themselves either by interpretation of the Qur'ān that could suit their purposes or by forging some saying of the Prophet justifying their flight from the world. Most of these evidently forged traditions give us a clue at least that the Christian monkish influence became marked after about two centuries<sup>1</sup> from the advent of Islam. The word Sūfī derived from *Sūf*, a coarse woollen stuff, itself bears evidence to the imitation of the rough attire of the Christian monk.

It is a noteworthy fact that mysticism which is commonly associated with quietism found the greatest upholder of activism and free shaping of one's own destiny in Rūmī. We have seen how strongly he defends the freedom of man's will and how he values evil and resistance of all kinds as a necessary factor for the development of personality or, as he puts it, 'to bring out the value of the soul.' In many places in the Mathnavī he has offered a pitched battle against determinism and quietism. He did not, like the quietistic Sūfī, explain away the Prophet's prohibition of asceticism<sup>2</sup>; on the other hand, he tries to give it a

1. Note the following traditions manufactured (by Sulaymān Sanjarī) to justify asceticism :

اذ اتت على امتي ثلثمائة و ثمانون سنة حلت لهم العزبه والترهب على رؤس الجبال -

*Revue de l'histoire des Religions*, XXXVII, 314, quotes from *Qut al-qalūb* a tradition giving the date as 200.

Also Ghazālī, *Iḥyā*, Vol. II, page 21 :

خير الناس بعد الهاتين الخفيف الحاذ الذي لا اهل له ولا ولد -

Quoted by I. Goldziher (*Mater zur. Entwicklungsgeschichte des Sufismus*).

2. - لا رهبانية في الاسلام عليكم الجهاد و انه رهبانية امتي -

"There is no monasticism in Islam. You are enjoined *jihād* (holy war) and that is the monasticism of my *umma* (people)."



philosophical basis. "When there is no enemy, striving and fighting is impossible."<sup>1</sup> Inclinations and passions are necessary to develop virtue by their conquest. God asks you to spend in charity, but how can one fulfil this command unless one earns first? The presence of evil is indispensable for the realisation of values.

It is in Sūfism that we find the most interesting development of this problem. Some of the most renowned Sūfīs have in a way acted as 'the advocates of the Devil,' thereby robbing the principle of Evil of all its horror, sometimes ranking the Devil with the prophets and sometimes placing him even above them. In his dialogues, Hallāj triumphantly asserts the Devil's superiority to Adam and to Moses, though

۱. شہوتت ار نبود نباشد امتثال  
 خصم چون نبود چه حاجت حیل تو  
 زانکہ عفت هست شہوت را گرو  
 غازی بر مردگان نتوان نمود  
 زانکہ نبود خرج بے دخل کہن  
 تو بخوان کہ اکسبو ثم انفقو  
 رغبتے باید کزاں تابي تو رو  
 بعد ازاں لا تسرفو آن عفت است
- چون عدو نبود جهاد آمد محال  
 صبر نبود چون نباشد میل تو  
 هين مکن خود را خصی رهبان مشو  
 بے هوا نہی از هوا ممکن نبود  
 انفقو گفت است پس کسبے بکن  
 گرچه آورد انفقوا را مطلق او  
 ہم چناں چون شاه فرمود اصبرو  
 پس کلو از بہر دام شہوت است

"When there is no enemy, the Holy War is inconceivable; (if) thou hast no lust, there can be no obedience (to the Divine Command).

"There can be no self-restraint when thou hast no desire; when there is no adversary, what need for thy strength?

"Hark, do not castrate thyself, do not become a monk; for chastity is in pawn to (depends on the existence of) lust.

"Without (the existence of) sensuality 'tis impossible to forbid sensuality: heroism cannot be displayed against the dead.

"God hath said, 'Spend': therefore earn something, since there can be no expenditure without an old (previously acquired) income.

"Although He used (the word) 'Spend' absolutely, (yet) read (it as meaning) 'Earn, then spend.'

"Similarly, since God has given the command 'Refrain yourself,' there must be some desire from which thou shouldst avert thy face.

"Hence (the command) 'Eat ye' is for the sake of the snare (temptation) of appetite; after that (comes) 'Do not exceed': that is temperance." (v, 575-582).



he has made a concession to orthodoxy by raising Muḥammad above him—but a later Persian poet had the boldness to assert their equality.<sup>1</sup> It is in the same spirit that some of the greatest Sūfīs looked more tolerantly at *Kufr* (infidelity), because infidelity too was serving the purposes of God in its own way.<sup>2</sup>

Among the Sūfīs, however, it is only in Rūmī that we find an earnest attempt to understand the nature of evil in its moral, physical and metaphysical aspects. The following may be taken roughly as a summary of his views on this problem.

Evil has a real, though phenomenal and relative, existence. Things in themselves are neither good nor bad. Values are not inherent in things, but consist in the attitude of the individual towards things. The same thing may be good for one individual in one situation and bad for another individual either in the same or in a different situation.<sup>3</sup> “Poison from one

1. در مذهب عاشقان یک رنگ ابلیس و محمد است هم سنگ

“According to the religion of the pure lovers, Iblīs and Muḥammad are companions (on the same path).”

2. کفر و دین است در رهِت پویان وحده لا شریک له گویان

“Infidelity and faith are traversing your (i.e. God's) path, saying He is one, and without a partner.”

*Ḥadiqa* of Sanā'ī, edited by Major Stephenson, Calcutta, 1910.

3. نکته دیگر تو بشنو اے رفیق هم چو جاں او سخت پیدا و دقیق  
در مقامی هست هم این زهر مار از تصاریف خدائی خوشگوار  
در مقامی زهر و در جائی دوا در مقامی کفر و در جائی روا

“(Now), my friend, hearken to another saying (which is) like the soul very clear (to mystics) and abstruse (to the rest) :

“In a certain place (spiritual degree), through Divine dispositions, even this poison and snake (worldliness and sensuality) is (rendered) digestible.

“In one place (it is) poison and in one place medicine, in one place infidelity and in one place approved.” (I, 2597-2599).

There are many other verses in the same strain in the continuation of it :

پس بد مطلق نه باشد در جهان بد به نسبت باشد این را هم بدان



standpoint may be medicine from another standpoint." Even knowledge itself is neither good nor bad ; in the service of the soul it acts as a friend but when solely devoted to the body it may act as a viper.<sup>1</sup> It is not the action but the intention that is good or bad.

Absolute optimism that closes its eyes to the evil in the world and sees everything as equally good and beautiful is as great a folly as its other extreme.<sup>2</sup> Our Universe is a mixed product 'where right is mixed with wrong and true and counterfeit coins are

در زمانه هیچ زهر و قند نیست      که یکے را پا دگر را بند نیست

"Hence there is no absolute evil in the world : evil is relative. Know this (truth) also.

"In (the realm of) Time there is no poison or sugar that is not a foot (support) to one and a fetter (injury) to another." (iv, 65-66).

زهر مار آن مار را باشد حیات      نسبتش با آدمی باشد ممات

"Snake-poison is life to the snake, (but) it is death in relation to man." (iv, 68).

1. علم را بر دل زنی یارے شود      علم را بر تن زنی مارے شود

2. گر نه معیوبات باشد در جہاں      تاجراں باشند جملہ ابلہاں

پس بود کالا شناسی سخت سہل      چون کہ عیبے نیست چہ نا اہل و اہل

ورہمہ عیب است دانش سود نیست      چون ہمہ چوب است اینجاعود نیست

آنکہ گوید جملہ حق است احمدی ست      وانکہ گوید جملہ باطل او شقی ست

"If there be no faulty things in the world, all fools would be (shrewd) merchants.

"Then it would be very easy to know (the value of) goods : when there is no defect, what (is the difference between) the incompetent and the competent (appraiser) ?

"And if everything is faulty, knowledge is of no advantage : since everything here is (common) wood, aloes-wood is not (to be found).

"He that says, 'All are true'—'tis folly (on his part) : and he that says, 'All are false'—he is damned." (ii, 2939-2942).

چونکہ حق و باطلی آمیختند      نقد و قلب اندر چرمداں ریختند

پس محک مے بایدش بگزیدہ      در حقائق امتحانہا دیدہ

"Inasmuch as truth and falsehood have been mingled, and the good and bad coins have been poured into the travelling bag.

"Therefore they need a picked touchstone, one that has undergone (many) tests in (assaying) realities." (ii, 2966-2967).



put in the same bag.' Virtue is the free choice of the good in preference to the vicious, and wisdom consists in distinguishing true from false. With the disappearance of the vicious and the false, the possibility of virtue and wisdom will also vanish. The consciousness of values, their appreciation and realisation, all presuppose the existence of that which is not valuable. It is the very resistance of the air that enables the bird to fly; no flight is possible in a vacuum. So he who complains of the resisting or negative forces of life does not realise that that which he considers valuable exists only by virtue of resistance and negation. All the vicissitudes of life and its painful elements are meant to bring out and actualise the possibilities of human character.<sup>1</sup> Good and bad and true and false are mixed by God with the purpose that man may create within himself a touchstone. Man ought not to complain of evil because the very possibility of evil has made him the paragon of existence.<sup>2</sup> For animals lower than man, good and evil do not exist and for angels, the beings higher than man, the possibility of evil does not exist. Man, with his double nature

1. حق تعالیٰ نرم و سرد و رنج و درد      بر تن ما می نهید ای شیر مرد  
خوف و جوع و نقص اموال و بدن      جمله بھر نقد جاں ظاهر شدن

"The High God lays upon our body, O man of fortitude, heat and cold and grief and pain,

"Fear and hunger and impairment of wealth and body—all for the sake of the soul's coin being brought into sight (and use)." (ii, 2963-2964).

2. در حقیقت هر عداو داروئے تست      کیمیا و نافع و دلجوئے تست

"In reality every foe (of yours) is your medicine : he is an elixir and beneficial and one that seeks to win your heart." (iv, 94).

زین سبب بر انبیاء رنج و شکست      از همه خلق جہاں افزوں تراست

"For this reason the tribulations and abasement (laid) upon the prophets is greater than (that laid upon) all the (other) creatures in the world." (iv, 100).



and equal possibilities for both, is free to sink lower than the beast or, by the conquest of evil, to rise higher than the angels.<sup>1</sup>

1. حديث : أن الله تعالى خلق الملائكة وركب فيهم العقل وخلق البهائم وركب فيها الشهوة وخلق بني آدم وركب فيهم العقل والشهوة فمن غلب عقله على شهوة فهو أعلى من الملائكة ومن غلب شهوة على عقله فهو أدنى من البهائم .

"Tradition : Verily, the most High God created the angels and set reason in them, and He created the beasts and set lust in them ; and He created the sons of Adam and set in them reason and lust ; and he whose reason prevails over his lust is higher than angels, and he whose lust prevails over his reason is lower than the beasts."

Rūmī has written many verses in exposition of this tradition. (iv, 1497 ff.).



## THE IDEAL MAN

## MAN IS AN EPITOME OF CREATION

**A** MICROCOSM in form, he is macrocosm in meaning. The Perfect Man is an ideal, for the realisation of which the whole creation strives and towards which the whole course of evolution is directed. He is the final cause of creation and, therefore, though having appeared last in point of time, he was really the first mover. Chronologically, the tree is the cause of fruit but, teleologically, the fruit is the cause of the tree. The soul of man is in its essence divine. Having somehow fallen and become veiled, it is trying to realise itself again.<sup>1</sup>

|                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| پس بصورت عالم اصغر توئی     | پس بمعنی عالم اکبر توئی   |
| ظاہرا آن شاخ اصل میوه است   | باطناً بہر ثمر شد شاخ هست |
| سر نبودے میل و آمید ثمر     | کے نشاندے باغباں بیخ شجر  |
| پس بمعنی آن شجر از میوه زاد | گر بصورت از شجر بودش ولاد |

"Therefore in form thou art the microcosm, therefore, in reality thou art macrocosm.

"Externally the branch is the origin of the fruit; intrinsically the branch came into existence for the sake of the fruit.

"If there had not been desire and hope of the fruit, how should the gardener have planted the root of the tree?

"Therefore in reality the tree was born of the fruit, (even) if in appearance it (the fruit) was generated by the tree." (iv, 521-524).

بہر این فرمودہ است آن ذو فنون رمز نحن الاخرون السابقون

"For this reason that master of (all) sorts of knowledge (i.e. Muhammad) has uttered the allegorical saying, 'We are the last and the foremost.' " (iv, 526).



Throughout the Sūfī literature there runs a paradox which can be simply formulated in the phrase : Man is nothing and Man is everything. Even men like Hallāj and Bāyazīd, who were loudest in the declaration of their identity with God, sometimes speak of themselves as the humblest of the humble who have neither movement nor thought nor will. They were bearers of a double personality; sometimes the one, sometimes the other aspect asserting itself. To characterise the two aspects, the terms *Nafs*<sup>1</sup> and

اول فکر آخر آمد در عمل خاصه فکرے کو بود وصف ازل

"The thought (idea), which is first, comes last into actuality, in particular the thought that is eternal." (iv, 530).

آخرون السابقون باش اے ظریف بر شجر سابق بود میوه لطیف

"O clever one, be thou (according to the Prophet's saying, 'We are) the hindmost and the foremost': the fresh fruit is prior to the tree." (iii, 1128).

پس بصورت آدمی فرع جہان وز صفت اصل جہاں این را بدان  
ظاہرش را پشہ آرد بچرخ باطنش باشد محیط ہفت چرخ

"Therefore Man is in appearance a derivative of the world, and intrinsically the origin of the world. Observe this !

"A gnat will set his outward frame whirling round (in pain and agitation) ; his inward nature encompasses the Seven Heavens." (iv. 3766-3767).

گر تو آدم زاده چوں او نشین جملہ ذریات را در خود بین

"If you are born of Adam, sit like him and behold all his progeny in yourself." (iv. 809).

See also the following from Shiblī : *Shi'ral-'Ajam* :

|                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| تا ترا پردہ تو ساخته اند | عالم از کردہ تو ساخته اند    |
| ہرچہ در آسمان گردانست    | در تو چیزے مقابل آنست        |
| نسخہ عالم کبیر توئی      | گرچہ در آب و گل صغیر توئی    |
| وحدت از مطالعت ہویدا شد  | در تو گم گشت و از تو پیدا شد |

دوزخ است این نفس و دوزخ از دہاست کو بد ریاہا نہ گردد کم و کاست 1.

"This carnal self (*nafs*) is Hell, and Hell is a dragon (the fire of) which is not diminished by ocean (of water)." (i, 1375).

روح حیوانی کنفس واحد است

"The human spirit is one essence." (ii, 188b).



*Rūḥ*<sup>1</sup> are generally used, the former to characterise the lower and the latter the higher self. It was by a slow and steady process that these two words were crystallised into these definite connotations. The word *Nafs* is used in the Qur'an as equivalent to a person or a self to denote particular states of which sometimes qualifying words were used which later on became part of the terminology of spiritual psychology, i.e. *nafs-i-ammāra*<sup>2</sup> (the commanding self) driving man to do evil and *nafs-i-lawwāma*<sup>3</sup> (the rebuking self) and *nafs-i-muṭm'inna*<sup>4</sup> (the satisfied self). Used without any adjective, it meant simply self, i.e. in the phrase لا تقتلوا أنفسكم (don't kill yourself).

Even after its degradation it could still be used for the highest, the Universal soul *nafs-i-kull*,<sup>5</sup> a term borrowed from the Neoplatonists and the Stoics along with the allied conception '*aql-i-kull* (the universal reason). The word *Rūḥ* is used in the Qur'an as equivalent to spirit or the soul as such without qualifications.

From the time when Sūfism became metaphysical, *Nafs* and *Rūḥ* were interpreted in the terms of the philosophy of Being. Besides them we meet in the Sūfī terminology with *Qalb* (which literally means

1. نفس نمرودست و عقل و جان خلیل روح در عین است و نفس اندر دلیل  
 "The fleshy soul is Nimrod and the intellect and spirit are the Friend of God (Abraham): the spirit is concerned with reality itself, and the fleshy soul with the proofs." (ii. 3311).
2. ان النفس لامارة بالسوء.  
 "The human soul is certainly prone to evil." (xii. 53.)
3. ولا أقسم بالنفس اللوامة.  
 "And I do call to witness the self-reproaching spirit." (lxxv. 2.)
4. يا ايها النفس المطمئنة - ارجعي الى ربك راضية مرضية.  
 "(To the righteous soul will be said :) 'O (thou) soul, in (complete) rest and satisfaction! come back thou to thy Lord,—well-pleased (thyself), and well-pleasing unto Him!'" (lxxix. 27-28).
5. عقل کل و نفس کل مرد خداست عرش و کرسی را ابدان کز وے جداست



heart) and *Sirr* (the inner hidden self). In Persian mystical poetry the word *jan*<sup>1</sup> which literally means life is used for life in general as well as for the soul as equivalent to *Rūḥ*. Then again we meet both among the strict philosophers as well as the mystics the word *Rūḥ* as a common noun for all the selves that a man carries within him, i.e. *Rūḥ-i-ḥaiwānī* (the animal self) and *Rūḥ-i-‘aqlī* (the rational self) and *Rūḥ-i-nabwī*<sup>2</sup> (the prophetic self), the last one representing the typically Islamic contribution, adding to and transcending the Greek intellectualistic psychology.

In moral discourses, however, we meet generally only with *Nafs* and *Rūḥ*, the former representing in man the principle of Evil, and the latter the divine spark, the former belonging to ‘*Ālam-i-khalq* (the realm of creation) and the latter emanating out of the ‘*Ālam-i-amr* (the realm of will). The mutual relation of these two leads back to the fundamental problem of the Origin of Creation and the Origin of Evil that we have treated in a separate chapter. The Sūfis believe that the lower self of man can be annihilated by the realisation of Truth and by moral purification or, to use their terminology, *mujāhida* leads to *mushāhida*. This belief in the realisation of the divine self of man

1. جان ها در اصل خود عیسی دم است

“Spirits in their original nature have the (life-giving) breath of Jesus.” (i. 1598).

جان نباشد جز خبر در آزمون هر کرا افزون خبر جاننش فزون

“(Spiritual) life is naught but knowledge in (time of) trial: the more knowledge one has, the more (spiritual) life one has.” (ii. 3326).

جسم ظاهر روح مخفی آمد دست جسم همچون آستین جان همچو دست

“The body is manifest, the (vital) spirit is concealed: the body is as the (sleeves), the spirit as the hand.” (ii. 3253).

2. روح وحی از عقل پنهان تر بود زانکه او غیب است و او زان سر بود

“The spirit (that partakes) of Divine inspiration is more concealed than the intellect, because it is (of) the Unseen: it belongs to that side.” (ii. 3258).

بارنامه روح حیوانی ست این پیشتر رو روح انسانی به بین

“Such is the magnificence of the animal spirit: advance farther, behold the human spirit.” (iv. 1887).



in this very life is responsible for the Sūfī conception of the Perfect Man, that has not only played an important role in their views about God and man, but has had far-reaching practical consequences. Politically, it was connected with the doctrine of the *Imām*,<sup>1</sup> the representative vicegerent of God on Earth, which was only a political embodiment of the invisible *Qutb* of the Sūfīs, the head of the spiritual hierarchy pulling the strings of creation from behind the veil.

When man, in his innermost essence, is always divine, because it is the spirit of God that is the essence of his soul, and when the realisation of this divine self in this very life is possible, then it followed logically that man having realised his ideal self becomes the source of infinite power and knowledge. The exaltation of the Prophet to a cosmic principle, on the one hand, and the deification of the Imām and the Mahdī, on the other, go hand in hand with the Sūfī conception of the ideal man, which in later Islam found a systematic exposition in the philosophy of Jīlī.<sup>2</sup> As besides God no Being is possible, so the ideal man in so far as he lives in Being is hardly distinguishable from God. Like the conception of the Sage among the Stoics, the conception of the ideal man became the very centre of Sūfī *Weltanschauung*. His spirit contains the higher types of the Real; his body, the lower. His heart is the throne of God and his intellect, the pen of Destiny; his soul is the Preserved Tablet (*Lawḥ-i-Mahfūz*). "His good thoughts are the angels, his doubts are the evil spirits and the Devil."<sup>3</sup>

1. See about this the excellent work of Tor Andrae, *Die Person Muhammads*, p. 302; *Der Offenbarungsbegriff* where he discusses the problem of the deification of the Imāms (Stockholm, 1917).

2. Jīlī's famous work *al-Insān al-Kāmil* has been recently printed in Cairo. Al-Jīlī (767-811 A.H.).

See the excellent sketch about Jīlī's conception of the Perfect Man. S. M. Iqbal, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, Lahore, Bazm-i-Iqbal, p. 121. Also in the chapter on the Perfect Man (Ch. II). R. A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, Cambridge, 1921.

3. Quoted by M. Horten, *Die Philosophie des Islam*, München, 1924, p. 157.



The cosmical man carries within himself the Archetypes of everything. "I am the Ruling power in both the worlds, Here and Hereafter; in both the worlds I saw nobody whom I could fear or from whom I could hope to get any favour; I saw only myself." Both worlds represent the unfolding and the manifestation of the ideal man. Like the Eternal God, nobody was before me to whose demands I could be required to adjust myself and similarly nothing comes after me.

Such views about the Ideal Man had become current coin since Hallāj and Bāyazīd, and Rūmī's view of the Ideal Man is substantially the same, that living in God man can know like God and work like God. The first requisite is the knowledge of one's own self: *من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه* (he who knows his own self, knows God).

نقد حال خویش را گر یے بریم      هم ز دنیا هم ز عقبی برخورداریم

"If we know our actual condition, we shall eat the fruit of the Here and Hereafter."

Referring to the Qur'ānic description of Christ as the Spirit of God, Rūmī uses very much the language of Eckhart, that the birth of Christ is an ever-recurring phenomenon of the birth of the higher self in man.

جانها در اصل خود عیسی دم است      یکدمش زخم است و دیگر مرهم است  
گر حجاب از جانها برخاسته      گفت هر جانے مسیح آساست

"The souls in their origin are possessors of the life-giving breath of Christ; at one moment they are the wound and at other moment they themselves are the healing (ointment). If the veil were lifted from the souls, every soul would say: 'I am Messiah.'"  
(i. 1598-1599).

An ultrarational divinely bestowed knowledge that springs from within the soul itself makes man see into the life of things. That is what is technically



called '*Ilm-i-ladunnī*,<sup>1</sup> the knowledge with God (Me), whose source is not the senses. That is the kind of knowledge which was bestowed by God on Adam which made the angels pay homage to him. That is what is termed Seeing with the Light of God, with a sight that pierces the heavens.

آدم خاکی زحق آموخت علم      قابه هفتم آسمان افروخت علم

"The man of clay got knowledge from God which lighted the Universe to the seventh heaven." (i, 1012).

والسواء انشقت آخر از چه بود      از یکے چشمے که ناگه بر کشود

"Through what was the heaven rent asunder, through an eye that opened all of a sudden."<sup>2</sup>

1. Rūmī calls it also '*ilm-i-'ind-allah* which means very much the same thing in different words :

علم الانسان خم طغرائے ماست      علم عند الله مقصدهائے ماست

That man has within himself an ultrarational and a supersensuous source of knowledge to which access is possible not through contemplation but through purification of the heart from all that is ungodly, is a firm conviction of the Sūfīs and Rūmī repeats it in the Mathnavī with a wealth of illustrations :

نیست آن ينظر بنور الله گزاف      نور ربانی بود گردون شگاف

"That (saying), 'he sees by the light of God,' is not vain, the Divine Light rives the sky asunder." (iv. 3400).

چشم آدم کو بنور پاک دید      جان و سر نامها گشتش پدید

"To the eye of Adam that saw with Pure Light the life and secret of Names were revealed." (i. 1246).

عقل دو عقل است اول مکسبی      که در آموزی چو در مکتب صبی

"Intelligence consists of two intelligences ; the former is the acquired one which you learn, like a boy at school." (iv. 1960).

عقل دیگر بخشش یزداں بود      چشمه آں درمیان جاں بود

"The other intelligence is the gift of God: its fountain is in the midst of the soul." (iv. 1964).

2. *السواء انشقت* occurs in the Qur'an in various places in the description of the Day of Judgment.



چشم آدم کو بنور پاک دید جان و سر نامہا گشتش پدید

“To the eye of Adam that saw with Pure Light the life and secret of Names were revealed.” (i, 1246).

مدح این آدم کہ نامش مے برم قاصرم گر تا قیامت بشمرم

“To the praise of this Adam whom I have mentioned I cannot do full justice to the end of time (to the Day of Judgment).” (i, 1248).

هر کرا باشد زسینه فتح باب او ز هر ذره ببیند آفتاب

“Whosoever has a door opened in his breast sees a sun in every atom.”

The essential condition for receiving this knowledge is a pure and unsullied heart ‘white like snow’ which becomes a mirror of Reality.

دفتر صوفی سواد و حرف نیست جز دل اسپید همچون برف نیست

“The Sūfī’s book is not (composed of) ink and letters: it is naught but a heart white as snow.” (ii, 159).

آنکہ او بے نقش و سادہ سینہ شد نقش هائے غیب را آئینہ شد

“He who has an impressionless and clear breast becomes a mirror for the impressions of the Unseen.”

In connection with the ideal personality of man, the Sūfīs developed a conception of prophethood and its medium of knowledge Revelation (*Wahī*) that was diametrically opposed to the dogmatic orthodoxy of Islam. For Islam, prophethood constituted the highest dignity of man, and the last of the prophets was regarded as its perfect embodiment, the ‘Seal of the Prophets’ with whom the door of prophethood and consequently of revelation was closed. After the Prophet, only the learned men and the Revivers of Faith at the head of every century could serve as guides and teachers, excepting Christ and Mahdī whose reappearance would mean the approach of the Day of Judgment. That the door of revelation was



closed could not satisfy the deeper requirements of spiritual minds, so the Sūfīs threw this dogma overboard.

In order to compromise with orthodoxy, most of the Sūfīs adhered outwardly to the finality of prophethood in Muḥammad but brought forward another doctrine that sainthood (*wilāyat*) is superior to prophethood. As it would have sounded blasphemous if stated without qualification, so an ingenious interpretation of it made it acceptable within the church of Islam. It was said that the Prophet himself had two aspects, prophethood and sainthood, but the latter aspect was superior to the former. Prophethood is double-faced, one face towards the Creator and the other towards the Creature, but sainthood has only one face, a face wholly turned towards God. Looking to God undisturbed by the world is better than looking to both at the same time.

The Shī'as solved this problem for themselves by making the spirituality of the Prophet inheritable and, what some of the Imāms claimed for themselves, raised them far above the Prophet. But after the disappearance of the twelfth Imām the door of imāmat was also closed, although the disappeared Imām is believed to be still living and might come out at any moment to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. As has already been said, imāmat was one of the potent factors in the formulation of the exaggerated conception of the ideal man as logos or as cosmic force.

The saints were clothed with all the attributes of prophethood except the promulgation of law; otherwise, under a disguised terminology, everything special to the prophets reappeared in the saints. The saint was *Walī*, 'the friend of God,' instead of *Nabī*, a prophet; his miracle was *karāma* (a favour from God) as distinguished from *mu'jazzah*, the overpowering and supernatural happening attributed to the prophets. In order to avoid stepping on the toes of prophethood, Revelation too appeared under a different name *ilhām* (inspiration)



or *wahī-i-dil* (the Revelation of the Heart). Ghazālī, the spokesman of orthodoxy as well as of mysticism, had taken an important step in developing a theory of prophetic consciousness as a stage in the development of the human mind. It is a characteristic of philosophy as well as of mysticism to bring out the Universal from the Particular and the Historical, a tendency directly opposed to the dogmatic interpretation of positive religion. This feature of Rationalism and Mysticism asserted itself in Ghazālī. The view of Rūmī is fundamentally the same as that of his illustrious predecessor but, in order to appreciate their agreement and difference, let us first consider the following formulation of the problem in the words of Ghazālī :

بل الايمان بالنبوة ان يقربا ثبات طور واء العقل تنفتح فيه عين يدرك  
بها مدركات خاصة والعقل معزول عنها كعزل السمع عن ادراك الالوان -

“Believing in prophethood means to acknowledge that there is a stage above Reason in which an eye is opened that has perception special to it which Reason is incapable of comprehending as the ear is incapable of perceiving the colours.”

وبالجملة فمن لم يرزق منه شيئاً بالذوق فليس يدرك من حقيقة النبوة الا  
الاسم -<sup>1</sup>

“And he who has not been granted a little taste of it (*Tasawwuf*) his knowledge of the reality of prophethood is no more than the words.”

And then on the basis of personal experience, which is an extremely valuable piece of religious psychology, he says :

بان لي بالضرورت من مما رسة طريقهم حقيقة النبوة و خاصيتها -

“By practising their way, i.e. the way of mystics, the reality of prophethood and its character became clear to me.”

Further on, he tries to convince the reader of the

1. *Munqidh min al-Dalāl* (Egyptian edn.), p. 12.



reality of prophetic revelation by appeal to the ascending grade of knowledge among men. The life of Reason develops genetically and chronologically after the life of the senses but transcends the data of the senses in a way that there is nothing common between the universal categories of Reason and the data of the senses. Prophetic Revelation is the product of an ultrarational faculty which is latent in man. In the following passage he tries to make it intelligible to us by bringing it near to the untaught knowledge of a genius. It is worth noting that in this passage he makes no distinction between Revelation and Inspiration<sup>1</sup>: Who can deny the different grades of development of natural reason in different people? If reason were equally developed in everybody, all would have understood the sciences equally well and the difference between the dull and the intelligent would not exist. To one even a long teaching does not make the thing clear and to the other only a hint is sufficient. Another one is so perfect that ideas spring from his mind without having been taught by anybody as God said 'its oil gives light although no fire touched it—Light upon Light,' and that is an analogy for the prophets. Subtle things are uncovered to their inner eye, things that they never learned from others. That is called Inspiration (*ilhām*) and the Holy Prophet meant this when he said that 'the Holy Ghost breathed it into my mind.'

1. Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā al-'Ulūm* (Egyptian edn.), بيان تفاوت الناس في العقل p. 78 :

و كيف ينكر تفارقت العزيزه ولولاه لما اختلف الناب في فهم العلوم ولما اتقسموا الى بليد لا يفهم بالتفهم الا بعد تعب طويل من المعلم والى ذكى بعضهم بادن رمز و اشارة و الى كامل تنبعث من نفسه حقائق الامور بدون التعلم كما قال الله تعالى يكاد زيتها يفي ولولم تمسه النار نور على نور و ذالك مثل الانبياء عليهم السلام اذ يتضح لهم في بواطنهم امور غامضة من غير تعلم وسامع ويعبر ذالك بالالهام وعن مثله عبر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حيث قال ان روح القدس نفث في روحى -



The point worth noting in Ghazālī's exposition of the nature of prophethood is that he tries to prove by argument the possibility of it and refers to mystic experience for the perfect realisation or conviction of its truth, without giving us his views in an outspoken manner as to the question whether it is a faculty latent in every human being or only some are exceptionally endowed with it. His orthodoxy would not let him draw the logical consequence from his premises. Prophetic consciousness being only the product of a higher development ought to be potentially possible for many men and at all times, but this would have flatly contradicted the orthodox view that prophethood was closed with Muḥammad.

In this respect we find Rūmī more logical and more outspoken. He accepts the theory of Ghazālī that the prophetic self is higher than the rational self and is capable of apprehending realities closed to the categories of the intellect.

هست جانے در نبی و در ولی      باز غیر از عقل و جان آدمی  
زانکه آوغیب است آوزاں سر بود      روح وحی از عقل پنهان تر بود

"Then again, besides the Reason and Soul of the (ordinary) man, there is another Soul (Life) in the Prophet and the Saint.

"The spirit of Revelation is more hidden than Reason itself because it belongs to the Unseen on the other side (of Reason)."  
(ii, 3258).

He agrees with Ghazālī that this experience cannot be described in the terms of any other experience.

نہ نجوم است و نہ رمل است و نہ خواب      وحی حق واللہ عالم بالصواب  
از پئے روپوش عامہ در جہاں      وحی دل گویند آن را صوفیاں  
وحی دل گیرش کہ منظر گاہ آوست      چون خطا باشد چو دل آگاہ آوست  
مومنہا ینظر بنور اللہ شدی      از خطا و سہو ایمن آمدی

"This Revelation from God is not like knowing the Unseen through astrology or geomancy or dreams (and God knows better the



truth about it).

"In order to disguise it from the (orthodox and uninitiated) masses, the Sūfīs call it the Revelation of the Heart.

"Take it as such, for it is the Heart that is the place of the Divine spectacle ; it cannot be wrong because it is the Heart that is conscious of Him.

"Thou, O Believer, seeing with the Light of God hast become immune from mistake and error." (iv, 1852-1855).

The frankness and honesty of Rūmī is worth admiring. How boldly he admits that the Revelation of the Heart (*Wahī-i-dil*) is a term invented by the Sūfīs to describe a fact which in reality is not different from the Revelation of the prophets that they are supposed to have received either directly from God or through Gabriel or through the Holy Ghost. Then he says that there is no objection in accepting the term because really the Heart is the stage of Divine Realities. Nothing real comes to the Soul from outside. The Holy Ghost is a projection or objectification of an aspect of the human soul itself. Although he has warned us against taking Revelation as a dream, still, for the purpose of illustrating the subjective origin of Revelation, he uses the analogy of a dream :

|                               |                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| چیز دیگر ماند اما گفتنش       | با تو روح القدس گوید بے مننش    |
| نے تو گوئی ہم بگوش خویشتن     | نے من و نے غیر من اے ہم تو من   |
| ہمچو آن وقتے کہ خواب اندر روی | تو زپیش خود بہ پیش خود شوی      |
| بشنوی از خویش و پنداری فلاں   | با تو اندر خواب گفت است آن نہاں |

"Another thing remains to say, but the Holy Ghost shall say it to you ; I need not say it.

Nay, it is you yourself whispering into your own ear without me and without anyone other than me, O thou that art me.

"Just as, when you fall asleep, you go from the presence of yourself into the presence of yourself.

"When dreaming, you hear things from your own self and think that somebody else said it to you." (iii, 1298-1301).

خودچہ جائے حدیدار یست و خواب دم وزن واللہ اعلم بالصواب

"Indeed, what occasion (is there) for the terms *wakefulness* and *sleep* ? Do not speak, for God knows best what is right." (iii, 1304).

Again in another place he tells us that the source



of Revelation is nothing but the Eternal Spirit of man himself:<sup>1</sup>

طوطی کآید ز وحی آواز او      پیش از آغاز وجود آغاز او  
اندرون تست آن طوطی نہاں      عکس او را دیدہ تو بر این و آن

"The parrot whose voice comes from (Divine) inspiration and whose beginning was before the beginning of existence—

"That parrot is hidden within thee : thou hast seen the reflection of her upon this and that (the things of the phenomenal world)." (i, 1717-1718).

He proves various parts of this thesis from the text of the Qur'an<sup>2</sup> itself. Is man less than the honey-bee that is the recipient of Revelation as to how it should suck honey from different flowers and how it should build and manage the honeycomb ?

Then again God revealed to a crow to dig the earth and teach the son of Adam how to dispose of the dead. Rūmī tells us further that all arts and sciences had their origin in a flash of inspiration, though afterwards experience and commonsense build further and add to it.<sup>3</sup>

۱. ہس محل وحی گردد گوش جان      وحی چہ بود گفتن از حس نہاں  
گوش جان و چشم جان جز این حس است      گوش عقل و چشم ظن مفلس است

"Then the spiritual ear becomes the place where *wahī* (inspiration) descends. What is *wahī* ? A speech hidden from sense-perception.

"The spiritual ear and eye are other than this sense-perception, the ear of (discursive) reason and the ear of opinion are destitute of this (inspiration)." (i, 1461-1462).

۲. واوحی ربک الی النحل ان اتخذی من الجبال بیوتا و من الشجر و مما یعرشون

"And thy Lord taught the Bee to build its cells in hills, on trees, and in (men's) habitations." (xvi. 68).

۳. چونکہ اوحی الرب الی النحل آمدست      این کہ 'کرمنا' ست بالا می رود  
این نجوم و طب و حی انبیاست      عقل و حس را سوئے بے سوره کیجاست

"This astronomy and medicine is (knowledge given by) Divine inspiration to the prophets : where is the way for intellect and sense (to advance) towards that which is without (spatial) direction ? (iv, 1294).

قابل تعلیم و فہم است این خرد      ایک صاحب وحی تعلیمش دہد



One who believed in the infinite potentialities and the divine values of every human soul could not believe that prophethood or revelation was only an historical fact of the past.<sup>1</sup> It is open to everyone to be what man has ever been. So we find him making another bold assertion which would have been sufficient to condemn him if it had not escaped the notice of the theologians : I mean his denial of the finality of prophethood. He maintains that it is open to every individual not only to become a saint but to become a prophet for a nation—a highly astounding assertion within the church of Islam.

مکر کن در راه نیکو خدمتے تا نبوت یابی اندر آمتے

“Strive in the way of good service in order to become a prophet in a nation.” (v, 469).

This is indeed a straightforward and honest conclusion from the premises of mysticism as represented by Rūmī. Ever since Ḥallāj it has been quite an excusable doctrine among the Ṣūfīs to assert the

جمله حرفتها یقین از وحی بود اول او لیک عقل آن را بر فزود

“This intellect is capable of being taught and of apprehending, but (only) the man possessed of Divine inspiration gives it the teaching (which it requires).

“Assuredly, in their beginning, all trades (crafts and professions) were (derived) from Divine inspiration, but the intellect added (something) to them.” (iv, 1296-1297).

کندن گورے کہ کمتر پیشہ بود کے ز فکر و حیلہ و اندیشہ بود

“When was grave-digging, which was the meanest of trades (of all), (acquired) from thought and cunning and meditation?” (iv, 1301).

1. Maulānā ‘Abdul ‘Alī Baḥr al-‘Ulūm, whose commentary on the Mathnavī is most widely used, commenting on the line وحی چہ بود گفتن از, says in the spirit of Rūmī [vide his *Sharah* (Nawalkishore Press, Lucknow), vol. I, p. 94] :

گفتن حس نہاں کہ حس قلب است وحی است نہ مطلقاً بلکہ گفتن آنچه کہ از حق گرفتند و وحی بدین معنی عام است اولیاء و انبیاء را و متکلمین لفظ وحی را اطلاق بر الہامات اولیاء نمی کنند الا بمجازاً۔



identity of the divine and the human souls. انا الحق ('I am God') could be excused, but انا النبي ('I am *the* Prophet'), or انا نبي ('I am *a* prophet') was an unpardonable offence. The spirit of Islam in this respect has been aptly embodied in the famous advice of a Persian poet : به خدا دیوانه باش و با محمد هوشیار (Be insane with God but be sober and careful with Muḥammad).

It is a remarkable phenomenon among the Sūfīs how some of them asserted their identity with God but inferiority to the prophets. A typical instance of it is Bāyazīd who has been perhaps the greatest asserter of his unqualified divinity in the history of Sūfism. He tells us how he journeyed thirty thousand years in the Realm of Unity and thirty thousand years in the Realm of Divinity and thirty thousand years in the Realm of Singleness. "After ninety thousand years I beheld Bāyazīd (myself) and saw that all I had seen was myself. Then I crossed four thousand deserts and reaching the end found that I had reached only the point where the prophets begin. Ever wandering in that Immensity and ever thinking that nobody has gone beyond it and no higher stage is possible, when I looked closely I found my head at the foot of a prophet. So I discovered that the ultimate limit of the saints is the starting point of the prophets, but the prophets have no limit."<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion that Bāyazīd reached after ninety thousand years of incessant journeying through the immensities of the Unseen is one accepted by Islam in general as self-evident. One need not undertake such a long journey to verify the truth of it. Sainthood and prophethood are central questions of Sūfism and Islamic theology. In his views of this problem Rūmī stands on a hill all by himself. For him there is no fundamental difference between sainthood and prophethood and both represent a stage of develop-

1. 'Attār, *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā*, p. 175.



ment realisable by every individual. The facts of positive religion have value only in so far as they represent eternal truths present always at every point. He is conscious of the fact that the 'historicism' of positive religions is felt by some as an obstructive element that hinders them to see the timeless values symbolised by historical facts.<sup>1</sup> Referring to the story of Moses, he says that it was not an historical event that happened only once; the drama of Moses and Pharaoh is an eternal play enacted in every human soul. With regard to the objection of the polytheists of Mecca that the Qur'an was nothing but stories of ancient people (اساطیر الاولین), he gives a similar reply that stories in the Scripture were not repeated as historical occurrences but as eternal truths that are timeless.

Now let us sum up Rūmī's conception of the Ideal Man.<sup>2</sup>

The Ideal Man is one who has realised his transcendental or eternal self which is uncreated and divine.

1. ذکر موسیٰ بند خاطر ها شد است      کاین حکایتهاست که پیشین بدست  
 ذکر موسیٰ بهر روپوش است لیک      نور موسیٰ نقد تست اے مرد نیک  
 موسیٰ و فرعون دو هستی تست      باید این دو خصم را در خویش جست

"The mention of Moses has become a chain (obstruction) to the thoughts (of my readers), (for they think) that these are stories (of that) which happened long ago.

"The mention of Moses serves for a mask, but the Light of Moses is thy actual concern, O good man.

"Moses and Pharaoh are in thy being: thou must seek these two adversaries in thy self." (iii, 1251-1253.)

2. In Ode VIII in Nicholson's *Diwān-i-Shams Tabriz*, Rūmī has summed it up himself. The following are a few couplets out of it:

- |                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| مرد خدا گنج بود در خراب   | مرد خدا شاه بود زیر دلخ        |
| مرد خدا نیست ز نار و ز آب | مرد خدا نیست ز باد و ز خاک     |
| مرد خدا بارد در بے حساب   | مرد خدا بحر بود بے کراں        |
| مرد خدا نیست فقیه از کتاب | مرد خدا عالم از حق بود         |
| مرد خدا را چه خطا و صواب  | مرد خدا زان سوئے کفر است و دین |



It is possible for every individual to realise it ; it is the end and goal of life.

The man who realises it is clothed with the attributes of divinity and it is indifferent whether one calls him a saint or a prophet.

The Ideal Man is in immediate touch with God ; neither prophets nor angels intervene between the two.

Different individuals having attained to this stage are united in a way that they are one as well as many ; in the Realm of Spirit numerical plurality does not exist.

The Ideal Man can work miracles which do not mean the annihilation of causation but only bringing into play causes that are not within the reach of common experience.<sup>1</sup>

The Ideal Man freely merges his own will in the will of God in the ultimate relation of love ; so one can say that he exists and does not exist at the same time.

Life in God is not annihilation but transformation ; therefore, every soul that begins to live in God has his being in Him.

As the Ideal Man becomes emptied of his own self, it is God that lives in him and speaks through him and works through him.

His eye pierces every evil because he sees with the Light of God.

His assertion of his identity with God is justifiable because it is not he but God that speaks through

هست بر اسباب اسباب دگر      در سبب منکر بدان افکن نظر  
آن سبب ها انبیاء را رهبر است      آن سبب ها زین سبب ها برتر است

"And those causes which guide the prophets on their way are higher than these (external) causes." (i, 844).

این سبب را محرم آمد عقلها      وان سبب ها راست محرم انبیا

"(Ordinary) minds are familiar with this (external) cause, but the prophets are familiar with these (spiritual) causes." (i, 846).



him.<sup>1</sup>

The Ideal Man is identical with Logos or the Universal Reason that creates and governs the Universe.

The Ideal Man being the Final Cause of Creation is the last of Creation in point of time but existed before the Creation as an idea.<sup>2</sup>

The Adam of the Qur'an represents the Ideal Man to whom the angels paid homage.

The Ideal Man is the embodiment of Universal Reason and is identical with the Universal Soul ; therefore, no power is outside of him.<sup>3</sup>

1. گه ترا از تو بکل خالی کند      توشوی پست او سخن عالی کند  
گرچه قرآن از لب پیغمبر است      هر که گوید حق نگفت او کافر است

"To make you entirely empty of self, (so that) you should become low and He should make the word lofty (within you)

"Though the Qur'an is (dictated) from the lips of the Prophet—if anyone says God did not speak it, he is an infidel." (iv, 2121-2122).

2. The following verses sum up Rūmī's ideas about the Ideal Man who has reached the goal :

- این چنین معدوم کو از خویش رفت      بهترین هستها افتاد و رفت  
او به نسبت باصفات حق فناست      در حقیقت در فنا او را بقاست  
جمله ارواح در تدبیر اوست      جمله اشباح هم در تیر اوست  
آنکه او مغلوب اندر لطف ماست      نیست مضطر بلکه مختار ولاست  
منتهائے اختیار آن است خود      کاختیارش گردد اینجا مفقود

"Such a non-existent one who hath gone from himself (become helpless) is the best of beings, and the great (one among them).

"He hath passed away (*fanā*) in relation to (the passing away of his attributes in) the Divine attributes, (but) in passing away (from selfhood) he really hath the life everlasting (*baqā*).

"All spirits are under his governance ; all bodies too are in his control.

"He that is overpowered (overwhelmed) in Our grace is not compelled ; nay, he is one who freely chooses devotion (to Us).

"In sooth, the end of free-will is that his free-will should be lost here." (iv, 398-402).

- گرچه از لذات بے تاثیر شد      لذتی بود او و لذت گیر شد

"Although he was unaffected by (worldly) pleasures, (yet) he was a man of (spiritual) pleasure and became the recipient of (that) pleasure." (iv. 405)

3. عقل کل و نفس کل مرد خداست      عرش و کرسی را ابدان کز وے جداست

The following is the specimen of the interesting phenomenon how



The Ideal Man does not represent only a possibility. In every age there is someone who has realised it.<sup>1</sup>

It is not contemplation but thorough transformation of the self. The Ideal Man is absolutely dead to himself. He lives in God and God lives in him.

No metaphor can explain the nature of this union of God and Man. Incarnation as well as Unification as conceptions derived from space are misleading when applied to non-spatial realities.

all the powers imagined by positive religion as acting on man from outside were understood by Sūfism as potentialities of the human soul itself :

پس جبرائیل کہ مشہود رسل علیہم است و وحی از جانب حق تعالی  
مے رساند آن حقیقت جبرائیلیہ است کہ قوتے از قوائے رسل بود - متصور  
شدہ در عالم مثال بہ صورتے کہ مکنون بود در رسل مشہود مے شود  
و مرسل مے گردد و پیغام حق مے رساند - پس رسل مستفیض از خود اند نہ  
از دیگرے - پس ہرچہ کہ رسل مشاہدہ مے کنند مخزون در خزائے جناب  
ایشان بود - همچنین عزرائیل کہ بہ وقت موت مشہود مے شود میت را آن  
ہاں حقیقت عزرائیلیہ است کہ قوتے از قوائے میت است کہ متصور شدہ بہ  
صورتے در عالم برزخ مشہود مے شود میت را و این صورت ہم مکنون بود  
در میت و باین مشیر است - قول اللہ تعالی : قل یتوفاکم ملک الموت الذی  
و قل بکم - بگوائے محمد وفات مے دہد شا را آن ملک الموت کہ سپردہ کردہ  
شدہ است بشا یعنی در شا مت قوتے از قوائے شا شدہ - و در قبر کہ  
منکر و نکیر مشہود خواہند شد از ہمیں قبیل است -

See 'Abul 'Alī Bahr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ bar Mathnawī* (Niwalkishore Press, Lucknow), vol. III, p. 56.

پس بہر دورے ولیے قائم است تا قیامت آزمائش دائم است

"Therefore, in every epoch (after Muhammad) a saint arises (to act as his vicegerent) : the probation (of the people) lasts until the Resurrection." (ii, 815).

پس امام حی و قائم آن ولی مت خواہ از نسل عمر خواہ از علی مت

"That saint, then, is the living Imam who arises (in every age), whether he be a descendant of 'Umar or of 'Alī." (ii, 817).



## THE SURVIVAL OF PERSONALITY

*Fanā and Baqā*

THE question of the survival of personality is one of the most difficult problems in the Sūfī Metaphysics. This difficulty arises out of their conception of Being and things in so far as they exist, exist in God and are God. What lends individuality to a thing is the imperfection and limitation imposed by the mixture of non-being with Being. All phenomenal contingent existence is perishable. The Qur'ān had put the Sūfī Metaphysics on the horns of a dilemma, on the one hand asserting that God is all in all, the Inside and the Outside, the Beginning and the End, and everything outside His Existence is perishable, and on the other hand maintaining the immortality of man. So the problem was to reconcile individual immortality with the pantheistic conception of Being. It was solved by the doctrine that, yet although Being belongs only to God, God, out of His overflowing and infinite Benificence, can impart His Being to non-being. Rumī sums up this view in the following verses :

کل شیئی هالک الا وجهه      چون نه در وجه او هستی مجو  
هر که اندر وجه ما باشد فنا      کل شیئی هالک نبود ورا  
زانکه در الاست او از لا گذشت      هر که در الاست او فانی نه گشت<sup>1</sup>

1. Compare with it Junaid, *Tadhkirat ul-Awliyā*, Vol. II, p. 25 :

حیات هر که بنفس بود موت او برفتن جان بود و حیات هر که بخدا ئے بود  
او نقل کند از حیات طبع بحیات اصل و حیات پر حقیقت این است -



"All things are perishable except His Being ; when you do not exist in Him, do not expect to live. He who loses himself in Our Existence is no more subject to the law of universal mortality. He has passed from annihilation to abiding Existence and he who exists in abiding Existence is not mortal."

God has a power of nourishing and transforming the imperfect to raise it to perfection. By losing itself in God, individuality is not annihilated but transformed :

هستی ات در هست آن هستی نواز      همچو مس در کیمیا اندر گداز

"Thy existence in the Being of the Nourisher of all Being is like base metal being transformed through alchemy."

But when, on the one hand, individuality is considered to be a sin and, on the other hand, the survival of personality is maintained, the problem becomes intellectually unintelligible. It is exactly here that Sūfism maintains the reality of an ultrarational truth and parts with the categories of the understanding. We stand here face to face with a dilemma.<sup>1</sup> To the intellect the essence of a thing is not imaginable without its attributes ; our knowledge of a thing consists of a collection of its attributes. Now when Rūmī says that the essence of the soul survives in God but its attributes are annihilated,<sup>2</sup> the conception is unintel-

1. چون بدو زنده شدی آن خود دوی است      وحدت محض است آن شرکت کے است  
شرح این در آئنے اعمال جو      کہ نیابی فہم آن از گفتگو

"When thou hast become living through Him, that (which thou hast become) is in sooth He : it is absolute unity ; how is it co-partnership ? Seek the explanation of this in the mirror of (devotional) works, for thou wilt not gain the understanding of it from speech and discourse." (iv, 2767-2768).

2. از انا چون رست اکنون شد انا      آفریں ہا بر انا نے ہے عنا

"Since it has been delivered from 'I'-hood, it has become 'I' : blessings on the 'I' that is without affliction." (v, 4140).

کے شود کشف از تفکر این انا      این انا مکشوف شد بعد از فنا  
مے فتد این عقابہا در افتقاد      در مغائے حلول و اتحاد

"How should this 'I' be revealed by thinking ? That 'I' is revealed (only) after passing away from self (*fanā*). These intellects in



ligible in spite of the numerous analogies by which he tries to illustrate it. Existence, as the intellect understands it, is conditioned and limited ; to get rid of all limitation is tantamount to getting rid of all existence. But that is exactly what the Sūfī asks us to do. He tells us that real immortality is association with God by getting rid of limited and conditioned individuality :

قرب نے بالا نہ ہستی رفتن است      قرب حق از جنس ہستی رستن است  
نیست را چہ جائے بالا پست وزیر      نیست رائے زود و نے دور است و دیر

“To be nigh (unto God) is not to go up or down : to be nigh unto God is to escape from the prison of existence.

“What room hath non-existence for ‘up’ and ‘down’ ? Non-existence hath no ‘soon’ or ‘far’ or ‘late’.” (iii, 4514-4515).

When he tells us that along with time and space even plurality or number is a phenomenal category but still the individual soul survives in God without losing its individual essence, we do not know how to understand it or picture it to the imagination.

Out of the numerous analogies that he employs to explain his view of life in death and survival in annihilation, he considers the analogy of the organism as most illuminating. Matter taken up into a living organism is dead as matter but lives and participates in the life of the organism. The unity of the organism is consistent with the multiplicity of its constituent organs. Such is the nature of the transformation of the souls in the unitary life of the divine organism.

Hujwīrī has dealt with this problem under various headings. In the description of the Sūfī sect “Tayfūrīs,”<sup>1</sup> the followers of the famous Abū Yazīd Bisṭāmī, he says that their special doctrine was rapture (*ghalbā*) and intoxication (*sukr*). The question of *sukr* and *sahw* (sobriety) is very closely allied

their quest (of the real ‘I’) fall into the abyss of incarnation (*ḥulūl*) and *ittiḥād*.” (v, 4146-4147).

1. Abū Yazīd Tayfūr b. ‘Isa b. Sarushān al-Bisṭāmī.



to the question of *Fanā* and *Baqā*, annihilation and subsistence. Abū Yazīd and his followers preferred intoxication to sobriety but Hujwīrī preferred the latter to the former because, according to him, no one is a proper model for others, unless he is steadfast (*mustaqīm*). Abū Yazīd argued that sobriety involves the fixity and equilibrium of human attributes which are the greatest veil between God and man, whereas intoxication involves the destruction of human attributes like foresight and choice and the annihilation of a man's self-control in God so that only those faculties survive in him that do not belong to the human genus; and they are the most complete and perfect. Junaid,<sup>1</sup> considered in Sūfism as equal in rank with Bāyazīd, held the contrary doctrine of sobriety. This is a sufficient proof that Sūfism is not one definite doctrine and no general statement about Sūfism can be true, every case demanding a separate study. Hujwīrī is in agreement with Junaid and remarks: "It is the best known and the most celebrated of all the Shaykhs have adopted it, notwithstanding that there is much difference in their sayings on the ethics of sūfism. It is interesting and instructive to note here the conflict between Husayn b. Manṣūr (al-Hallāj) and Junaid. Junaid asked him the purpose for which he had come to him. Hallāj said, 'For the purpose of associating with the Shaykh.' Junaid replied, 'I do not associate with madmen. Association demands sanity; if that is wanting, the result is such behaviour as yours in regard to *Sahl*' . . . . . Hallāj replied that 'both sobriety and intoxication were the attributes of man, and man is veiled from his Lord until his attributes are annihilated.' " <sup>2</sup> So

1. Abu'l Qāsim al-Junaid b. Muḥammad Ṭā'ūs al-'ulama.

2. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, R. A. Nicholson's translation, pp. 184-189.

It should be noted that Junaid was one of the learned men of Baghdad who put their signatures on the death sentence pronounced on Hallāj. ('Aṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā*).



we see that Hallāj, who was called mad and nonsensical by Junaid, was in perfect agreement with Bāyazīd who has been called by some as the first promulgator of the doctrine of Annihilation and, on account of having sprung from a soil saturated with Buddhistic ideas, is supposed to have been influenced by the Buddhistic doctrine of *Nirvāṇa*.

The soberest form of the doctrine of *Fanā* (annihilation) is nothing but the moral transformation caused by the substitution of the lower by the higher self. Says Hujwīrī, '*Adam* and *Fanā*, as they are used by Sūfīs, denote the disappearance of a blameworthy instrument and disapproved attribute in the course of seeking a praiseworthy attribute: they do not signify the search for non-reality by means of an instrument which exists. Again, he approaches the problem from the point of view of love and says that Purity is the characteristic of the lovers (of God) who are suns without cloud, because Purity is the attribute of those who love, and the lover is he who is dead (*fānī*) in his own attributes and living (*bāqī*) in the attributes of the beloved. But in the next step even the sober Hujwīrī advances to the unchangeable noumenal realm which the egoistic intellect can hardly distinguish from annihilation and the history of Sūfism verifies the truth of his following statement about the ultimate destination of the soul. "All the Shaykhs of this path are agreed that when a man has escaped from the captivity of stations (*maqāmāt*) and gets rid of the impurity of states (*ahwāl*) and is liberated from the abode of change and decay, and becomes endowed with all praiseworthy qualities, he is disjoined from all qualities . . . . . His state is hidden from the perception of intelligences and his time is exempt from the influence of thoughts. His presence (*ḥaḍḥr*) with God has no end, and his existence has no cause. And when he arrives at this degree, he becomes annihilated (*fānī*) in this world and the next and is made divine in the disappearance of humanity."



This is what Rūmī calls a second birth, which is nothing but dying in oneself and living in God, exactly in the spirit of St. Paul when he says : "It is not I but Christ that lives in me." When Christ said that, in order to gain one's life, one must lose it or to enter the kingdom of heaven one must be born again,<sup>1</sup> he was alluding to the same state. All the analogies used by Rūmī to illustrate this losing of self point to the conclusion that what is generally termed by some Sūfīs as annihilation is nothing but transformation of the lower into the higher self.<sup>2</sup>

هستی ات در هست آن هستی نواز      همچو مس در کیمیا اندر گداز

"Thy existence in the Being of the Nourisher of all Being is like base metal being transformed through alchemy."

Rūmī is a staunch believer in the development and survival of personality ; therefore, he is never tired of using the analogy of the organism to explain the living relation of the part to the whole. Every being develops and expands by becoming part of a higher organism. God is the Universal Spiritual Organism. Therefore, every individual should try to become an organ in the organism of God.<sup>3</sup> Rūmī, how-

1. Note the following metaphysical interpretation of it by Rūmī :

چون دوم بار آدمی زاده بزاد      پائے خود بر فرق علتها نهاد  
علت اولی نباشد دین او      علت جزوی ندارد کین او

"When man is born a second time, he puts his foot on the head of all causation ; he rises above Belief in the First Cause and bears no grudge against the Final Cause." (iii, 3576-3577).

2. Hujwīrī too understands *fanā*, (annihilation) and '*adam* (non-being) as meaning only transformation.

"Now the expression '*adam* and *fanā* as they are used by the Sūfīs, denote the disappearance of a blameworthy instrument and disapproved attribute in the course of seeking a praiseworthy attribute ; they do not signify the search for non-reality by means of an instrument which exists. (*Kashf al-Mahjūb*, Nicholson's translation, p. 28.)

3. جزو از کل قطع شد بیکار شد      عضو از تن قطع شد مردار شد  
تا نه پیوندد بکل بار دگر      مرده باشد نبودش از جان خبر



ever, is always conscious of the fact that these ultimate facts of life can be illustrated only by analogies and not by logical concepts ; but analogies, when strained too much, always break. They cannot stand a logical cross-examination. Cut away from the divine organism, we become lifeless limbs, but the organism of God is not such a whole whose "wholeness" or perfection can suffer by the falling away of parts. In the divine organism, the ultimate relation of the parts to the whole is ultrarational.

There are various other analogies that Rūmī uses in order to illustrate that the personality of the individual, notwithstanding its being overwhelmed by the Divine Presence and saturated with the attributes of God, is not annihilated. The essence of the individual survives, although his attributes may be merged in the divine attributes. He is lost only as the candle or the star is lost in the morning in the overwhelming effulgence of the light of the sun.<sup>1</sup> The fact of the annihilation of the self by being clothed with divine attributes, a state of consciousness in which the individual feels his identity with God is illustrated

جزو ازیں کل گر برد یکسو رود      این نه آن کل است کو ناقص شود  
قطع و وصل او نیاید در مقال      چیز ناقص گفته شد بهر مثال

"The part cut away from the whole becomes useless ; the organ severed from the body becomes dead. It remains lifeless unless it joins the organism again. But the infinite spiritual organism is not a whole that could lose anything by the falling away of the severed parts. This severance and joining cannot be described in words ; only an imperfect analogy has been offered." (iii, 1936-1937, 1939-1940).

همچنین جویائے درگاه خدا      چون خدا آمد شود جوینده لا  
هالک آید پیش و جمش هست و نیست      هستی اندر نیستی خود طرفه ایست  
اندرین محضر خردها شد زدست      چون قلم اینجا رسیده شد شکست

"Similar is the case with the seekers of the presence of God ; when God appears, the seeker sinks into nothingness. In the divine presence he perishes and then exists and does not exist. This existence in non-existence is a peculiar phenomenon, in the attempt to understand which many an intellect is lost, and the pen when it reaches this point is split. (iii, 4658, 4662, 4663).



by Rūmī by the analogy of red-hot iron in fire. The iron takes on the properties of fire without losing its own individual essence entirely. In that state, if it claims to be fire itself, it would not be wrong. In that condition it is fire and not fire at the same time! This explains the paradox how the individual, when ultimately saturated with the attributes of divinity, exists and does not exist at the same time.<sup>1</sup> It is not annihilation but transformation and the identification of attributes.

Rūmī interprets in the same terms the Prophet's Ascension (*mi'rāj*). According to him, flying physically to the heavens to meet God is absurd because God does not live in the heavens. The ascension of man is only spiritual; it is only divesting oneself of the attributes of one's narrow individuality to enter the realm of the Eternal and Unmanifested or, in the words of Rūmī *از جنس هستی رستن است*<sup>2</sup> Belief in bodily

1. هست از روئے بقائے ذات او      نیست گشته وصف او در وصف سو  
چون زبانه شمع پیش آفتاب      نیست باشد هست باشد در حساب  
هست باشد ذات او تا تو اگر      بر نهی پنبه بسوزد زان شرر  
نیست باشد روشنی ندهد ترا      کرده باشد آفتاب او را فنا

"The essence of his being survives but his attributes are merged in the attributes of God, like the flame of a candle that in the presence of the sun exists, and does not exist. The flame of the candle *exists* because if you put cotton on it it is burnt away; it *does not exist* because it gives you no light: the light of the sun has annihilated it." (iii, 3670-3673).

2. رنگ آهن محو رنگ آتش است      رنگ آتش دارد و آتش و ش است  
چون بسرهی گشت همچو زرکان      پس انا نارست لافش بے زبان  
شد ز رنگ و طبع آتشی محتشم      گوید او من آتشم من آتشم  
آتشم من گر ترا شک است و ظن      آزمون کن دست را بر من بزن  
آتشم من بر تو گرشد مشتبه      روئے خود بر روئے من یکدم بنه  
آدمی چون نور گیرد از خدا      هست مسجود ملائک ز اجتبا  
آتشی چه آهنی چه لب به بند      ریش تشبیه و مشبه بر مخند

"The colour of iron is lost in the colour of the fire, the iron has



ascension to a physical heaven to meet God was absolutely opposed to the fundamentals of Sūfī metaphysics; hence we meet among the Sūfīs most interesting interpretations of *Mi'rāj*. The following is a fine quatrain of Sarmad, the famous mystic beheaded in Delhi by the order of the orthodox Emperor Aurangzeb :

آن را که سر حقیقتش باور شد      خود پهن تر از سپهر پهناور شد  
ملا گوید که بر شد احمد به فلک      سرمد گوید فلک به احمد در شد

"He who realised the secret of his reality became more extensive than the Heavens; the theologian asserts that the Prophet went up to the Heavens but Sarmad says that the Heavens descended unto him."<sup>1</sup>

As the conception of '*adam* and *fanā* is of fundamental importance to understand Rūmī's outlook on life, let me add some illustrations to make his meaning clearer. Here is an extremely instructive passage which gives us Rūmī's conception of Being and its gradations. The Noumenal Realm which he calls '*adam* is the Realm of *amr* (Command or Will). It

assumed the colour of the fire and has become like fire. When it becomes red like gold, then its appearance boasts without words : 'I am fire.' Glorified by the colour and nature of fire it says, 'I am fire, I am fire, if you doubt it, then come, put your hand on me or touch my face with your face.' Such is the case of man ; lit up with the Light of God, this privilege makes him the object of adoration for the angels. Be silent, what is iron and fire : the analogy is ridiculous."

1. Cf. :

قرب نے بالا نہ ہستی رفتن است      قرب حق از جنس هستی رستن است  
نیست را چہ جائے بالا پست و زیر      نیست رائے زود نے دور است و دیر  
کار گاہ و گنج حق در نیستی ست      غرہ هستی چہ دانی نیست چہ ست

"The nearness to God is not attained by rising higher or diving deeper into space ; nearness to God is attained by shaking off the phenomenal existence. Early and late and far and near and high and low do not exist in the Noumenal Reality. The treasures of Truth are found in 'non-existence,' thou proud of thy existence knowest not what non-existence means." (iii, 4514-4516). (Note how the Real being is called *hast* and *naist* in the same breath.



is unitary and beyond the Phenomenal. This Will, says Rūmī, is an indivisible Noumenal Reality, but the moment it enters the Realm of Speech and Action it splits up into multiplicity in order to be grasped by the senses and the intellect.

|                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| اے خدا جان را تو بنما آن مقام | کاندرو بے حرف مے روید کلام  |
| تا کہ سازد جان پاک از سر قدم  | سوئے عرصہ دور پہنائے عدم    |
| عرصہ بس با کشاد و بافضا       | وین خیال و هست یابد زو نوا  |
| تنگ تر آمد خیالات از عدم      | زاں مسبب باشد خیال اسباب غم |
| باز هستی تنگ تر بود از خیال   | زاں شود دروے قمرها چو هلال  |
| باز هستی جہان حس و رنگ        | تنگ تر آمد کہ زندانے ست تنگ |
| علت تنگی ست ترکیب و عدد       | جانب ترکیب حس ها مے کشد     |
| زا نسوئے حس عالم توحید دان    | گریکی خواہی بدآن جانب بران  |
| امر کن یک فعل بود و نون و کاف | در سخن افتاد و معنی بود صاف |

“O God, point out to the soul that sphere where speech grows without words, so that it may hasten to the Realm of Truth through the Expanse of ‘*adam*, the source of all thought and Being. Thought is narrower than ‘*adam* and, therefore, oppressing. Then again *hast* or the manifested existence is narrower than thought; it gives us only partial aspects of things, the moon appearing as a crescent. The existence manifested to the senses is narrower still, it is a closed prison. This narrowness results from numbers and multiplicity and physical combinations born of the senses. The Realm of Unity is beyond the senses; if you desire Unity, turn that way. The Act of Will ‘Let there be’ was one (indivisible) Act, in speech it was split into two letters, and the meaning became manifest.” (i, 3092-3100).

So we see that Rūmī’s conception of immortality follows from his conception of the transcendental self and from his idealistic premises. Man is afraid of death because he considers himself to be a part of phenomenal nature in which things arise, grow and decay. So he wants to convince man of the fact that his real self, far from being a product of nature, is the source of all nature. The physical body as well as the Universe are the products and reflections of the



transcendental self of man.

بادہ در جوشش گدائے جوش ماست      چرخ در گردش امیر هوش ماست  
بادہ از ماست شد نے ما ازو      قالب از ما هست شد نے ما ازو

"Intoxication is not in the wine but in our own ecstasy. And the revolution of the spheres depends on our consciousness. The body owes its existence to us, not we to the body." (i, 1811-1812).

So he only is afraid of death who considers the Universe to be more real than his own self. Body is the shadow of the soul, not the soul the shadow of the body. The soul is the substance and the universe is its attribute. The realisation of this truth frees man from all fear of death.

سایہ خود را ز خود دانسته اند      چابک و چست و گش و برجسته اند  
اصل این ترکیب را چوں دیده اند      از فروغ و هم کم ترسیده اند

"They had recognised (the difference of) their (bodily) shadows from their (real) selves, and were brisk and alert and happy and exulting; since they had seen the origin of this (corporeal) composition, they were not afraid of the derivatives (which belong to the domain) of imagination." (iii, 1726, 1728).

پس بود دل جوهر و عالم عرض      سایہ دل چوں بود دل را غرض

"Hence the heat is the substance, and the world is the accident: how would the heart's shadow (reflection) be the object of the heart's desire?" (ii, 2266).

We have seen in Rūmī's doctrine of evolution that he approached the problem of immortality from the standpoint of development as well. In his transcendental aspect, man is already eternal and immortal, but, from the point of view of existence in time, man is sure of a progressive immortality. The conception of impersonal immortality had been developed in Sūfism long before Rūmī, but the idea of progressive immortality is absolutely original with him. Darwinism has taught the development of species through



struggle and selection but Rūmī taught the development of the individual soul making every death a stepping stone to rise to a higher life.<sup>1</sup>

از جہادی مردم و نامی شدم      وز نما مردم بحیوان سر زدم ۱.  
مردم از حیوانی و آدم شدم      پس چہ ترسم کے زمردن کم شوم

(Quoted in the Chapter on Evolution )



**P**ROFESSOR NICHOLSON, the greatest authority on Sūfism in the West, in his excellent little book, *Idea of Personality in Sufism*, made an attempt to show "that Sūfism is not necessarily pantheistic but often bears the marks of a genuine personal religion inspired by a personal God." He added, however, the warning that "we must beware of attributing to Moslems all that the term 'Personality' suggests to us." Furthermore, he is perfectly right in this statement that the expression "Divine Personality" cannot be translated into any Muslim language. My chief purpose in this work is to confine myself to the consideration of the question with reference to the position of Jalāluddīn Rūmī in this respect. But before dealing with the subject with reference to Rūmī, it is absolutely necessary to be clear about the term 'Personality' in general. The connotation of personality might be analysed as follows :

(1) It is more than 'individuality' which can be possessed by inanimate objects as well as animals.

(2) Personality is an essential human conception and the differentia to be added to individuality in order to raise it to personality consists in the plurality of independent egos entering freely into psychological relations with one another.

It, therefore, necessarily implies the plurality of



independent wills, endowed with human attributes, capable of entering into volitional unity.

Now it is quite evident that an absolutely transcendent God cannot possess personality and also an absolutely immanent God cannot be invested with these attributes. Absolute transcendence would lead either to the *Pramatma* or Brahman of the Vedanta or the ineffable 'One' of Plotinus or the 'Unknowable' of Herbert Spencer. Nor can the highest point of the pyramid of ideas of Plato, nor the 'Form of Forms' of Aristotle be personal. Absolute immanence, however, would make God an impersonal and infinite 'Something' or 'Everything' and would justify the remark of Schopenhauer that Pantheism is the romance of Atheism. In order to be personal, God must either be human through and through or at least possess a human aspect of existence. A thoroughly human God, however naïve and ridiculously anthropomorphic the conception may be, would at least be personal in the sense that man can come into personal touch with him. But a God absolutely exalted above all that we understand by human personality is merely an  $x$  at which the human mind can only look with a blank gaze.<sup>1</sup>

Now the only form of faith which must necessarily attribute some sort of personality to God is Theism. But Theism is not a definitely fixed idea of God. The theism of the Christian believers of Trinity, for instance, is fundamentally different from the theism of Islam. The Qur'ān, in spite of being thoroughly theistic, fought hard against the idea of God-Man, "a question of prime importance for Christians." "What we may call the philosophical use of 'Person' in the modern European languages has been determined by the use in the formulation of the Christian doctrine of Trinity of *Hypostasis* and *persona* as

1. For a thoroughgoing discussion of the problem, see C. C. J. Webb, *God and Personality*, Gifford Lectures, 1918-1919, London, p. 46.



equivalent expressions.”<sup>1</sup> So it is no wonder that Islam has not discussed the problem of the personality of God in the same way as Christianity. The exact equivalent of person in Arabic is *shakhs*, a word which Islam never applied to God and the one solitary tradition—لا شخص أفير من الله (‘there is no person more jealous than God’)—is only a form of expression equivalent to “No one is more jealous than God.” However, only the presence or absence of particular terminology should not mislead anybody into the idea that the problem never existed among the Muslims. Very much the same problem has been always discussed in Islam under the broader conception of *dhāt* and *ṣifāt* (Being and the Attributes of God) and their mutual relation, of *tashbīh* and *tanzīh* (anthropomorphism and ‘the Purity’ or exaltation of God above human attributes).<sup>2</sup>

As most of the theological disputes in Islam are based on the different verses of the Qur’ān and their interpretation, so was the case with the question of the Personality of God. The Allah of the Qur’ān is both transcendent and immanent, in close personal touch with the Universe and Man and still infinitely exalted above His Creatures. “Say Allah is one. Allah is He on Whom all depend; He begets not, nor is He begotten: and none is like Him.” This beautiful Meccan Sūra gives us in a nutshell the essence of the Qur’ānic Theism. It refutes polytheism, it refutes the doctrine of Trinity, it nullifies all attempts to imagine any likeness about God, but at the same time establishes the relation of God to the world as ‘He on Whom all depend.’<sup>3</sup> But Theism could not be

1. C. C. J. Webb, *God and Personality*, p. 46.

2. A third term *tajsim* stands for gross anthropomorphism that attributes a body to God.

3 The Holy Prophet is reported to have said when asked what هو الذي يصمد اليه في الحوائج (He is the Lord to Whom recourse is had in every need). Quoted in the English translation of the



saved by making God an absolutely abstract transcendent 'One'; so the Qur'an gives Him enormous number of attributes analogous to the human qualities, but warning in the same breath that there is 'nothing even like the likeness of Him.'<sup>1</sup> He is nearer to man than his own neck-vein, but His nearness is not spatial. He loves those who love Him and He answers those who invoke Him. Another most enchanting verse of the Qur'an attempts to give only a likeness of His Light asserting at the end that it should be taken only as a parable. "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth; a likeness of His Light is a niche in which is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, and the glass is as it were a brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil whereof almost gives Light, though fire touched it not—Light upon Light—Allah guides to His Light whom He pleases, and Allah sets forth parables for men and Allah is Cognizant of all things."<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ānic conception of God, though in many ways resembling the Jewish and the Christian conception, still possessed certain elements peculiar to itself which it is necessary to examine before we can understand and appreciate its development in Sūfism.

It can be summed up as follows:

(1) He is the Creator Who creates things out of nothing by a sheer act of will. When He desires to create a thing He only says, 'Let it be,' and there it is.

Qur'an, with Commentary, page 1234, by Muhammad Ali (Lahore, 1920).

Abū Ḥayyān, Imam Asīruddīn, Commentary on the Qur'an (بحر المحيط).

Imam Fakhruddīn Rāzī (تفسير كبير).

1. Ch. xliii. 11.

ليس كمثله شئى و هو السمع البصير -

Ch. xvi. 84.

فلا تضربو لله الامثال

2. Chapter xxiv 35.

Ghazālī's *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, a small but profound treatise, is a metaphysical exposition of these verses. W.H.T. Gairdner has done a translation of it into English (published by Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore).



He is an Artist (but not in the sense of the Greek thinkers): He creates Matter as well as Form. He created the Universe and the angels, before He created man.<sup>1</sup>

(2) He is the incessant source of life; everything and every being exists and persists through Him.<sup>2</sup>

(3) He is endowed with the highest attributes.<sup>3</sup>

(4) God is the only self-subsisting, eternal and necessary Being and everything else is created and has a contingent existence.

(5) He is immanent as well as transcendent. In spite of the fact that everything lives through Him, nothing is like Him and He transcends everything; He cannot be contained by the Universe and cannot be bound by time and space. He is immanent, because He is in everything and specially in the soul of man,<sup>4</sup> because it was His own spirit which He breathed into man.

(6) Everything except His own Being is perishable.

(7) The whole Universe is His revelation, but He reveals Himself more directly and personally to His chosen creatures to guide them and the others through them.

(8) He does not incarnate Himself; no man, be he the most perfect among men, can ever rise to be equal to God. The infinity of God's knowledge and power are immensely superior to anything attainable by man.

(9) He sees and hears and speaks and replies and can come into the closest personal touch with His chosen ones. He tries men and rewards virtue and punishes vice. He acts with justice and with truth,

1. The often-repeated *كن فيكون*.

2. (آيت الكرسي) *حي القيوم*.

3. *فلم يله الا سماء الحسنى* (vii. 180).

4. *وفي انفسكم افلا تبصرون* (li. 21).



but His will is inscrutable though He acts according to definite unalterable ways.

(10) God is the Light of the heavens and the earth, His knowledge comprehends everything in the heavens and the earth, nothing is hidden from Him and the slightest movement does not escape His notice.

(11) The physical eye cannot see Him.

(12) He is the beginning and He is the end; He is without and He is within.

This is in a nutshell the picture of God as presented by the Qur'an: the picture of the Unpicturable and the conception of the Inconceivable. The various sides of this picture, taken alone and exaggerated, might lead to all the possible conceptions of God ever entertained by the thought or imagination of man, except those which the Qur'an emphatically refuted, i.e. Polytheism in its various forms and the Christian Trinity. Otherwise, the God of Islam is both personal and impersonal, immanent as well as transcendent. Now what happened in the later history of this idea in Islam was due to looking only at one aspect of the picture and over-emphasising it at the cost of the other aspects. Exaggeration of the personal aspect led to Anthropomorphism, sometimes of a very gross type<sup>1</sup> and emphasis on the impersonal aspect led to a kind of intellectual abstraction identical with the One of Plotinus or the Brahman of Vedanta or the Unknowable of Spencer about which nothing could be thought, imagined or asserted. With emphasis on isolated verses of the Qur'an one could develop Pan-

1. For instance, the school of Ahmad ibn Hanbal. Hujwiri does not hold him responsible for the views of the Anthropomorphists: "The doctrines attributed to him today by certain Anthropomorphists are inventions and forgeries; he is to be acquitted of all notions of that sort." (*Kashf al-Mahjūb*, p. 117.)

Ghazali's *Miskāt al-Anwār* is a typical example of the conception of an utterly transcendent God Who cannot be conceived as the direct cause of the movement of the spheres which consequently must be entrusted to a vicegerent, *al-Matā'*.



theism, Anthropomorphism or any type of Theism, the only unavoidable feature in any view of God based on the Qur'ān being one or other form of the Unity of God. So long as no equal or associate was ascribed to Him, any view of God might claim to be orthodox.

The problem of the nature of God did not bother the early Muslims. A Hadīth<sup>1</sup> was often quoted that the Prophet forbade his followers to brood over the nature of God; they should meditate only on his blessings. But certain natures cannot help attempting to pierce behind the veil and to know not only the phenomena but the Essence of Being. With the study of Greek philosophy, Gnosticism and Neoplatonism, the Muslim conceptions began to undergo a gradual change. But in every case thoughts imbibed from foreign sources were engrafted on the verses of the Qur'ān that could give them a suitable basis.

The first noteworthy movement towards an abstract idea of God is met with among the Mu'tazilites. The Qur'ān had laid great emphasis on the unity of God, but that unity was no intellectual abstraction; it was a unity consistent with the multiplicity of attributes. The Mu'tazilites, however, thought that the unity was not consistent with multiplicity and hence denied the attributes of God. If any attribute is anything other than the essence, then, along with the essence, it denotes a multiplicity; if it is identical with the essence, it is nothing but the Unitary Essence. The multiplicity of the Attributes cannot co-exist with the unity of God. It was tantamount to the denial of all attributes, leaving God as a bare abstraction.

1. Hadīth : تفکرو فی الله ولا تفکرو فی ذات الله.

Rūmī has referred to this Hadīth in the couplet :

زین سبب فرمود ما را مصطفیٰ بحث کم جوئید در ذات خدا

"Hence Muṣṭafa (Muḥammad) enjoined us, saying, 'Do not seek to investigate the Essence of God.,'" (iv, 3700).



Mu'tazilism continued to flourish until, in the first half of the ninth century, it met the powerful orthodox reaction led by al-Ash'arī<sup>1</sup> (b. 873 C.E.). Ash'arī maintained the doctrine of the attributes of God even against the Mu'tazilites. God, according to him, was the Ultimate Necessary Existence which "carries its attributes in its own Being." Besides this they tried to prove that God could be visible in spite of His Being unextended.

Before Rūmī the speculation about the nature of God had hardly left any view unattempted. From naïve Anthropomorphism down to the ineffable 'One' of Plotin, the whole range of possible conceptions was traversed. Some attempted to deny the attributes of God as existing outside of Him and to identify them with His Essence; others tried to simplify the problem by reducing their number. Some identified Him with the Universe and the others with Man. Some made man a God and others made God a man. In every case there was a truth exaggerated onesidedly into a falsehood. Islam waited for a healthy synthesis of the scriptural, the philosophical and the mystical or, technically speaking, of *naql*, *'aql* and *kashf* (Authority, Reason and Personal Revelation),<sup>2</sup> in order to satisfy all the sides of the human mind. It is exactly this synthesis that is characteristic of Rūmī and the secret of his success in satisfying the cravings of the theologians, the philosophers and the mystics.

The following extracts out of the Mathnavī would verify the truth of this statement.

(1) Logical knowledge of God is impossible, be-

1. He was a pupil of al-Jubba'i—the representative of the younger school of Mu'tazilism in Baṣra. See Spitta, *Zur Geschichte Abdul Aasun Ashari und Shahrastani*, ed. Cureton, p. 82.

2. Cf. D. B. Macdonald, *Moslem Theology* (1903, London), p. 120, where he speaks of these three elements and remarks that these three threads are woven distinctly through the web of Muslim religious thought. "They were in the tissue of Mohammad's brain and they have been in his church since he died. Now one would be most prominent, now another, according to the thinker of the time: but all were present to some degree."



cause all knowledge depends upon comparison and limitations and moves in contraries; light is known by contrasting it with darkness and pleasure is known through pain. But God is the sum total of all existence and nothing stands outside of Him by contrasting with which He could be known.<sup>1</sup>

(2) Whoever thinks he knows the Essence of God deludes himself; he is deluded by an illusion of names and attributes. Thought is a creature and a creature can never be identified with the Creator; so such a lover of God loves a picture of his own imagination. If the bull or the ass desired to picture God, they could picture Him only as a bull or an ass; so is the case with man who desires to give Him a form.<sup>2</sup>

### 1. کار بے چوں را کہ کیفیت نہد

"Who shall describe the action of Him Who hath no like?" (i, 311).

پس نہانیہا بضد پیدا شود چونکہ حق را نیست ضد پنہاں بود

"Hidden things, then, are manifested by means of their opposite; since God hath no opposite, He is hidden." (i, 1131).

پس بضد نور دانستی تو نور ضد ضد را مے نماید در صدور

"Therefore thou knowest light by its opposite: opposite reveals opposite in (the process of) coming forth." (i, 1133).

نور حق را نیست ضدے در وجود تا بضد او را توان پیدا نمود

"The light of God hath no opposite in (all) existence, that by means of that opposite it should be possible to make Him Manifest." (i, 1134).

### 2 بر تو ہم مے کنی در عشق ذات ذات نبود وہم اسما و صفات وہم زائیدہ ز اوصاف وحد است حق نزائید است و او لم یولد است

"If he conceives that he is in love with the Essence (of God), conception of the (Divine) names and attributes is not the Essence.

"Conception is begotten of qualities and definition: God is not begotten, He is *lam yulad*." (i, 2757-2758).

عقل سایہ حق بود حق آفتاب سایہ را با آفتاب او چہ تاب

"Reason is the shadow of God: God is the sun: what power hath the shadow to resist His sun?" (iv, 2111).

آنکہ در ذاتش تفکر کرد نیست در حقیقت آن نظر در ذات نیست

"(As regards) that One whose Essence is an object of the thought, in reality the (thinker's) speculation is not concerning the Essence." (iv, 3701).



(3) Whatever you can think about is perishable ; so God is He Who cannot enter thought.<sup>1</sup>

(4) God is neither immanent nor transcendent and also nothing between the two; the questions "How" and "Why" do not apply to Him. No thought can comprehend Him, for He is not related to the effect like a cause.<sup>2</sup>

(5) God does not melt by thy grief, nor does thy pain make Him sorrowful. It is true that He is loving and merciful, but His mercy is nothing like human mercy, because the nature of human mercy is grief. Only the effect of His undefinable mercy can be experienced ; the nature of the attribute itself is incomprehensible. So all the perfections that we attribute to Him become known to us by their effects and examples only.<sup>3</sup>

هریکے در پردہ موصول خوست      وهم آو آنست کا خود عین آو است

"Everyone is naturally attached to some veil and judges that it is in sooth the identity ('ayn) of Him." (iv, 3703).

گر بدیدے حس حیواں شاہ را      پس بدیدے گاؤ و خر اللہ را

"If the animal sense could see the King (God), then the ox and the ass would behold Allah as such." (ii, 65).

1. هرچه افدیشی پذیرائے فناست      آنکہ در اندیشہ ناید آن خداست

"All that you may think of is liable to pass away ; he that comes not into thought is God." (ii, 3107).

2. متصل نے منفصل نے اے کمال      بلکہ بے چون و چگونہ و اعتدال

"Not united, not separated, O Perfection ; nay, devoid of quality or description or causation." (iii, 1340).

تو نہ گنجی در کنار فکرتے      نے بہ معلولے قرین چون علتے

"Thou art not contained in the bosom of any thought, nor art thou joined with the effect, as a cause." (iii, 1342).

3. اے عجب از سوزشت او کم شود      یا ز درد سوزشت پر غم شود

رحمتش نے رحمت آدم بود      کہ مزاج رحم آدم غم بود

رحمت مخلوق باشد غصہ ناک      رحمت حق از غم و غصہ است پاک

رحمت بے چوں چنین داں اے پدر      ناید اندر وهم از وے جز اثر

ظاہر است آثار و میوہ رحمتش      لیک کے داند جز او ماہیتش

هیچ ماہیات اوصاف کمال      کس نداند جز باثار و مثال



(6) "If I call Him the Sea of Life or the Life of the Seas, the analogy is not very expressive. It would be better to say God is that from Which comes all this and that and every kernel of life is in relation to Him only a shell."

All this would have led not to a God but to a bare abstraction if that was all what one could say about Him. That would have meant a kind of intellectual and religious Nihilism which we find in the logically consistent system of Vendanta ending in *Neti, Neti* and silence. So this negative theology was balanced and supplemented by Rūmī by positive elements in order to make personal attitude towards God possible. Let us see how he accomplished it.

Everyone tries to define the unknown God. The philosopher gives a definition and the critic contradicts him and a third one abuses both of them. Everyone describes the path leading to Him, as if he had been there. That is neither the whole truth nor are all of them entirely wrong; falsehood has truth as a necessary correlative.<sup>1</sup>

"O Marvellous! shall He suffer defect through your burning, or shall He become full of sorrow for the pain of your burning?"

"His mercy is not the mercy of Adam, for sorrow is mingled with the mercy of Adam.

"The mercy of the creation is anxious; the mercy of God is exempt from sorrow and anxiety.

"Know that the mercy of Unconditioned (God) is like this, O father; naught but the effect thereof comes into the imagination (is conceivable to us).

"The effects and fruit of His mercy are manifest, but how should anyone except Him know its quiddity?"

"None knows the quiddities of the attributes of (Divine) Perfection except through (their) effects and by means of confession." (iii, 3631-3636).

همچنانکه هر کسی در معرفت میکند موصوف غیبی را صفت ۱.

فلسفی از نوع دیگر کرده شرح باحشے مر گفت او را کرد جرح

"Even as in the matter of knowledge (of God) everyone describes differently, the Unseen Object of description.

"The philosopher gives an explanation of another kind; a scholastic theologian invalidates his statement." (ii, 2923-2924)

هریکے زبں ره نشان ها زان دهند تاگان آید که ایشان زان ده اند



Man's knowledge of God can best be illustrated by the story of the elephant<sup>1</sup> brought by the Indians to a country where it was unknown, and made to stand in an absolutely dark house. People flocked to that room to see it, but baffled by utter darkness they began to explore it by touch. One who touched his tusk only thought the elephant was like a pipe, another passed his hands on its legs and considered it a pillar, and another mounted his back and held it to be a commodious piece of furniture. So the individuals come into contact with one or other aspect of divine nature and generalise it as Absolute Reality. Such is the nature of man's analogies about the nature and attributes of God. So the true faith lies in the belief that, though man's knowledge cannot thoroughly comprehend the nature of God, and human and personal attributes, even when raised to infinite perfection, cannot be intelligibly applied to Him, still these analogies

ایں حقیقت داں نہ حق اند این همه      نے بکلی گمراہاں اند این رمہ  
زانکہ بے حق باطلے ناید پدید      قلب را ابلہ بیوئے زر خرید

"Each one (of them) gives these indications of the Way, in order that it may be supposed that they belong to that village.

"Know the truth to be this, (that) all these (various persons) are not in the right; nor (again) are this herd entirely astray.

"Because nothing false is shown without the True: the fool bought (desired) spurious coins in the hope of (its being) gold." (ii, 2926-2928.)

آنکہ گوید جملہ حق است احمق ست      وانکہ گوید جملہ باطل او شقی ست

"He that says, 'All are true'—'tis folly (on his part); and he that says, 'All are false'—he is damned." (ii, 2942).

۱. پیل اندر خانہ تاریک بود      عرضه را آورده بودندش ہنود

"The elephant was in a dark house: some Hindus had brought it for exhibition." (iii, 1259).

از نظر گہ گفت شاں شد مختلف      آن یکے دالش لقب داد این الف

در کف ہر کس اگر شمعے بدے      اختلاف از گفت شاں بیروں شدے

"On account of the (diverse) place (object) of view, their statements differed: one man entitled it '*dal*,' another '*alif*."

"If there had been a candle in each one's hand, the difference would have gone out of their words." (iii, 1267-1268).



are not entirely false; "They are but broken lights of Thee, and Thou, O Lord, art more than they" (Tennyson).

Nobody can think the Formless except under certain forms. Those who cannot get beyond these forms are injured thereby and are veiled from the Truth. But he who can transcend these forms and get to the Formless and takes these forms for what they are worth is not injured by them.<sup>1</sup> Creating forms and then transcending them is the progress by which man can approach God.

So Rūmī employed forms and analogies more profusely than any other Islamic writer but he was absolutely clear about the nature of analogy. The distinction between *mathal* and *mithāl* (likeness and analogy) given very clearly by Ghazālī is repeated more than once by Rūmī. There could be no phenomenal likeness for God or for Divine Realities but analogy is allowable and necessary. When God is likened unto Light or paradise is described as a garden, it is not likeness but analogy. So God is not an abstract and absolutely attributeless Being Who sits behind the scenes eternally unmoved. According to Rūmī, 'He is the most active Being and loves actively. Every day He is busy with something new.'<sup>2</sup> The Sovereign ruling the universe cannot sit idle. He loves movement; therefore even a useless effort is better than utter passivity.<sup>3</sup> What an emphatic refutation of

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. بادہ در جام است لیک از جام نیست<br>همچنان کز آتش ز دست دود<br>صورت اندر دست او چون آلت است<br>پیش او رویند و در نفی او فتند<br>ظن مبر صورت به تشبیهش مجو | از قدح هائے صور بگذر مایست<br>صورت از بے صورت آمد در وجود<br>فاعل مطلق یقین بے صورت است<br>پس صورها بنده بے صورت اند<br>چون صور بند است بر یزدان مگو |
|---|--|

(دفتر ششم)

2. Reference to the words of the Qur'an: کل یوم هو فی شان

3. کوشش بیہودہ بہ از خفتگی



Quietism generally considered to be inseparable from mysticism! God possesses the highest attributes of Life and Power and Knowledge and Love whose nature is not intellectually intelligible but 'whose fruits can be experienced by us.'

As Rūmī's God is not an abstract Unity, so living in Him and losing oneself in Him too does not mean the merging of the drop in the homogeneous ocean. He is rather a believer of *تخلقوا باخلاق الله* ('Acquire the qualities of God') and ultimately be clothed with His attributes without losing the essence of your own personality.<sup>1</sup>

آن کسان کز این جهان بگذشته اند  
لانیند و در صفات آغشته اند

We now pass on to a closer examination of Sūfī Monism (*wahdat al-wujūd*) because of all the views about God that standpoint which is generally termed Pantheism is most closely allied to the Sūfī Metaphysics. By many Rūmī is considered to be a Pantheist. Nicholson acknowledges that that was his first impression when he translated some odes out of *Dīwān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz* and knew less about Sūfism, but a fuller knowledge of the subject has convinced him that the standpoint of Sūfīs like Rūmī is consistent with belief in a personal God.<sup>2</sup>

1. It is a noteworthy fact about Rūmī that in all the numerous analogies employed by him to describe the ultimate Union of man with God, he always chose such as would picture the preservation of personality even in that ultimate absorption. The analogy of the stars in the morning losing themselves in the light of the sun is one of the numerous pictures that illustrate his viewpoint. He never talks of the drop sinking into the ocean.

2. R. A. Nicholson, *Idea of Personality in Sufism*.



## SŪFĪ PANTHEISM

9. IN THE literature about Sūfism one generally meets the ambiguous and sweeping assertion that Sūfism is a pantheistic doctrine. But a closer study of the subject reveals that such a great variety of metaphysical and moral ideas are classed together under that generic term that any and every view might be true about some one of its representatives, but no statement can be true about all of them. Islam itself has never classed Sūfism under any one heading and that explains the fact why Sūfism is not regarded as a doctrine with any definite boundaries to mark it off either from orthodox Islam or from any system of metaphysics. There must, however, be some justification for labelling it as pantheistic in general. When we ask ourselves: What is Pantheism?—the answer would be to say: It is a doctrine that maintains that all things are God or the 'All' is God, which is exactly how the Persian terminology describes it—*Hama ūst*,<sup>1</sup> All is He. The Arabic expression for it (*wahdat al-wujūd*, 'The Unity of Being') is tinged with metaphysics and is the philosophical way of putting the same simple idea. We need not stop to

1. Jāmī, *Lawā'ih*, Lahore 1330 A.H., p. 16 :

|                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| همسایه و همنشین و همره همه اوست | در دلق گدا و اطلسم شه همه اوست   |
| در انجمن فرق و نهانخانه جمع     | بالله همه اوست ثم بالله همه اوست |



examine whether Pantheism defined as above is a possible concept, because the conception of God is possible only as a relative idea, correlative with the world. So, saying 'All is God' is a contradiction in terms. To call this All as One or Absolute is more logical and hence one must acknowledge that the Arabic term describes the doctrine more exactly than its Persian equivalent. It is easy to see that all possible views about the Ultimate Reality can be termed as pantheistic if they propound only the Unity of Ultimate Reality, whatever its nature may be. Even most of the evidently atheistic doctrines can be identified with it, to justify the witty remark of Schopenhauer that Pantheism is the poetry of Atheism. Ethical Monism like that of Fichte or Panlogism like that of Hegel, the One-Substance doctrine of Spinoza with a number of others in so far as they are monistic are pantheistic. So the mere discovery or assertion that Sūfism is Pantheistic does not enlighten us in the least as to its view about the One Ultimate Reality.

Does the Qur'ān offer a basis for any type of Pantheism? The Qur'ān, on the whole, is simply theistic. God the Creator is different from His creation. The universe and the creation have a real existence apart from God. The creation is not an illusion or a vain show; it is an earnest Reality. It was quickened into being from nothing or non-being; its contingent existence depends upon God Who can reduce it to Nothing from which it sprang. But the history of religious consciousness shows that it seldom rests in this naïve view. The development and deepening of Theism slowly and steadily passes into the idea that in so far as all that exists exists through God, it exists in God and in so far as Existence is real, it is nothing but God Himself. That the Theism of Qur'ān by this inner logical necessity did pass into a type of Pantheism is quite evident from some of the verses scattered here and there. We can



trace this slow gradation. The transcendent God Who at first, as it were, standing outside of His creation, supports it and knows it, and manages it, comes nearer and nearer, nearer to man than his own jugular vein, identifies himself with some of his actions, then passes into the Light of the heavens and the earth (directionless because embracing all directions) and finally enters utter Immanence where He is the beginning and He is the End, He is the Outward, and He is the Inward, and Everything passes and only the Being of the Lord of Glory and Beneficence abides.<sup>1</sup>

If we call this Pantheism, then one must acknowledge that all Theism, if it does not stop at gross anthropomorphism and truly and faithfully follows its internal impulse, does end in the conception of an all-embracing Divinity 'in whom we live and move and have our being.' This type of Theism, in order to distinguish it from the naïve type on the one hand and from Absolute Monism on the other, was termed Panentheism by Krause,<sup>2</sup> and the popularity of this

1. فاینها تولوا فثم وجه الله [Whithersoever ye turn, there is the Presence of God (ii. 115)]; نحن اقرب اليه من حبل الوريد [For We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein (l. 16)]; ان الله يحول بين المرء وقلبه [God cometh in between a man and his heart (viii. 24)]; وما رميت اذ رميت ولكن الله رمى [When thou threwest (a handful of dust), it was not thy act, but God's (viii. 17)]; الله نور السموات والارض [God is the light of the heavens and the earth (xxiv. 35)]; هو الاول والاخر والظاهر والباطن [He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Immanent (lxii 3)]; ان ربي قريب مجيب [For my Lord is (always) near, ready to answer (xi. 61)]; فاني قريب [I am indeed close to them (ii. 186)]; لا اله الا هو كل شيء ماله الا وجهه [There is no god but He. Everything (that exists) will perish except His own Face (xxviii. 88)].

2. Krause (1781-1832), the disciple of Schelling, wished to combine the pantheistic *Weltanschauung* of idealism with the question of divine personality, an attempt which is parallel and analogous to the Sufi Metaphysics of Rūmī. He too calls God *Wesen* which is the exact equivalent of *Wujūd*. Furthermore, like Rūmī he built his conception on the analogy of the Organism (*Gliedbau*) and regarded the Universe as a *Wesengliedbau* (divine organism). *Vorlesungen über das System der Philosophie*, 1828.



term in the modern philosophy of religion shows that the term was really needed to mark it off from the two extremes on either side of it.

In the history of Sūfism all the three types are represented. Early Sūfism that was chiefly ascetic was nothing but a morbid attempt at moral purity, avoidance of sin for fear of God, and consequent renunciation of the world that is an inexhaustible source of temptations, and trust in God Who feeds the birds that do not sow and the lilies that do not spin. But though at this stage God is only a God of wrath and mercy, still there are latent in it some motives that would ultimately develop into Panentheism as well as Pantheism. The emphasis on the *One* first pales the face of the *Many* and makes it vanish out of existence. Overemphasis on the reality of the *Many* on the other hand leaves to the *One* only the reality of the immanent thread of relation between the *Many*, outside of which it does not and cannot exist. It has been rightly said that overemphasis on the reality of the Universe, in the West, has made it difficult to find a room for God in it and the overwhelming consciousness of the reality of God in the East has found it difficult to believe in the reality of the Universe and beings outside of Him. So it was really emphasis on the Omnipotence of God that from the very beginning worked in Islam as a motive leading towards Pantheism. All effort and even moral striving loses its independence, because all the good that the creature does has its source really in the Will of God. "Don't attribute purity to yourself, God knows better who is pure."<sup>1</sup>

In early Sūfism we find a movement away from the world to God, first actuated by fear and then dominated by love and Gnosis. In Hasan Baṣrī, Malik Dīnār, and Fudail Ayād, no other motive except flight from the world and trust in God is recognisable.

1. لا تزكوا أنفسكم هو اعلم بمن اتقى .



In the case of Rābi'a we find emphasised the motive of love of God for His own sake and not for the sake of any reward that He can bestow or any punishment that He can inflict. This love, too, setting its face exclusively towards God, first despised the world and then negated it, leaving only the Lover and the Beloved, and when the former was lost in the latter only God alone was left. In the love of Rābi'a, the lover and the beloved are still distinct realities, but a little later we see in Bāyazīd the first great step towards the ultimate identification of the worshipper and the worshipped or the knower and the known, or the lover and the beloved. With him we find the first expression of the concept of *fanā* (Annihilation) that plays such an important part in later Sūfism. Long before Hallāj he is reported to have asserted his identification with God : <sup>1</sup> انا الله لا اله الا انا فاعبدوني ('Verily I am Allah ; there is no God except me ; so worship me') an expression which would have been highly blasphemous for Muḥammad, but which the later mystics, even the most sober of them, tried to justify by their metaphysics of identity. In him, too, we find ecstasy as a form of divine contact, standing higher than morality and worship and knowledge. Simple *tawakkul* did not satisfy him. He said to a quietist ascetic : 'Leave aside thy resignation.' He heard somebody saying : "I wonder at him who knows God and does not worship Him," and replied : "I wonder at him who knows Him and yet worships Him,"<sup>2</sup> meaning thereby that the true knowledge of God should annihilate the individuality of the knower or the worshipper. He is also responsible for another utterance which is so Vedantic in its tone, equivalent to *Aham brahm asi* (I am Brahma) or *tat tvam asi* (That art thou). He says, "I went from God to God until they cried out from me within me 'O Thou I,'

<sup>1</sup> Even Ghazālī (*Iḥyā'*) tries to defend him saying that if the report is at all true, Bāyazīd was quoting them as the words of God.

<sup>2</sup> Farīduddīn 'Aṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā*, Vol I, pp. 157, 160.



i.e. I reached the stage of Annihilation in God.” Such expressions show that simple Theism has been transcended and the human ego in its self-realised transcendental aspect has been identified with God. “I am like a fathomless ocean with neither beginning nor end.” Somebody asked him: “What is ‘*Arsh* (Throne of God)?” He replied, “I”; “What is *Kusrī* (seat of God on ‘*Arsh*)?” He said, “I,” and so about the Tablet and the Pen, he said, “I.” Similarly, he asserted his identity with the prophets and the angels. At the astonishment of the questioner, Bāyazīd gave the explanation: “Whoever is annihilated in God (the Truth) and attains to the Reality of everything, he becomes all Truth (God); if he is not there, it is only God that sees Himself.”

It was about the end of the third century after Muḥammad that Muslim asceticism passed into speculation on the relation of the finite and the infinite and the worship of God passed into the bursting of the limits of a miserable human individuality to get identified with the unconditional transcendental ego. After that some of the ecstatic utterances of the mystics when formulated into a system of metaphysics leave us with nothing but a God who is all in all.<sup>1</sup> Whatever individual differences of opinion might exist among the Sūfīs about the various problems of life, one truth is accepted as self-evident by all of them, that ‘Being’ in so far it is Real is God; Real Being and God are identical. The لا اله الا الله of Islam was restated by the Sūfīs as لا موجود الا الله (There is no existence except God) to which sometimes لا موثر في الوجود (There is nothing (active) effective in Being except God) was added. One of the Sūfīs is said to have prohibited his followers to say الله اكبر because it implied comparison, while in reality nothing outside

1. Jāmī, *Lawā'ih* (Lahore edn.), p. 23 :

هستی که بود ذات خداوند عزیز      اشیا همه در وے اند و وے در همه نیز  
در دو عالم غیر یزداں نیست کس : Rūmī



God exists to be compared with Him.

(1) Persian mystical poetry in general is monistic considering the Infinite Being as an Ocean of existence from which the waves of the phenomena arise only to sink back again into it and their being and not being are identical. Those who have laid undue emphasis on this type of the Absolute were led to deny personality both to God and to man. Some of the Persian poets who were either Sūfis in right earnest or upheld it as a pleasant and fashionable doctrine made it their mission only to proclaim this simple Unity explaining away multiplicity by analogies. Farīduddīn 'Aṭṭār whose definition of *tawḥīd* (the Unity of Being) as التوحید اسقاط الاضافات that it connotes the Elimination of Relations leaves no room for the reality of personal relations within the Absolute. The following lines from him illustrate this attitude :

آب در بحر بیکراں آب است      ور کنی در سبو هان آب است<sup>1</sup>

"Water is water in the boundless ocean ; in the jug too it is the same water"

and then he sums up :

لیک غیر خدائے عز و جلال      نیست موجود نزد اهل کمال

"But, for the men of perfect knowledge outside of God of Power and Glory nothing exists."

For such a view life and death have no more significance than shifting shadows and passing sunshine.

از موت و حیات چند پرسى از من      خورشید به روزی در افتاد و برفت

"As to your repeated question about life and death I say it is nothing but the shining of the sun through a window for a moment and then passing away."

1. Quoted by Shiblī Nu'mānī : *Shi'r al-'Ajam*, Azamgarh 1339 A.H., in the chapter on Mystical Poetry, p. 120.



Note the following analogies employed for the illustration of the relation of unity to multiplicity:

در عالم اگر هزار بینند یکے ست      لیک آنا نرا کاہل یقین اند یکے ست  
اجزائے کتاب مختلف سے آید      کل را چو بگردند وبہ بینند یکے ست

"In the universe if you see even a thousand phenomena, to the men of faith they are One, like the book with separate parts when you turn its leaves and look it is One (in meaning)."<sup>1</sup>

(2) All numbers are repetition of the number One; two is twice one and three is thrice one and so on. All multiplicity is the repetition of unity:

این محض وحدت است بہ تکرار آمدہ

(3) God is the soul of the body of the universe; one unitary life flows through all the limbs:

اے از تو حقیقت تو بس ناپیدا      با آن کہ توئی ز ہر چہ پیدا پیدا  
توحید طلب عین ہمہ اشیاء شو      ہمچو یک جاں در ہمہ اعضاء پیدا

"O thou whose reality is extremely hidden from thee notwithstanding that thou art more obvious than all that appears! seek Unity and be the essence of everything like one life coursing through all the limbs."

حق جان جہاں است وجہاں جملہ بدن      ارواح و ملائکہ حواس این تن  
افلاک و عناصر و موالد اعضا      توحید ہمیں است دگرہا ہمہ فن

"God is the Life of the universe and the universe is His body. The spirits and the angels are the senses of this body and the heavens and the elements (organic and inorganic) are its limbs. This is Unity and all else is deception."

(4) As one luminous point swiftly revolving appears to be a circle; the circle considered as real is an

1. Also note the following lines from Ghalib, the famous Persian poet of India in the nineteenth century:

عالم کہ تو چیز دیگرے سے دانی      ذاتے ست بسیط منبسط دیگر ہیچ

"The universe that you take to be something else is nothing but one simple Being unfolded, all else is Nothing."



illusion ; the truth lies in the realisation that it is only the revolution of one point.<sup>1</sup>

سخن یکے ست ولے در نظر ز سرعت سیر کند چوں شعلہ جوالہ نقطہ پرکاری

“The idea (the word) is one but to our sight owing to the velocity of rotation a point appears like a circle.”

(5) Realising the fact that the analogy of the water in the ocean and the water in the pitchers was inadequate on account of the material of the pitcher being different from the water itself, another less objectionable analogy was conceived—that of the thread and the knots in the thread because the knots in spite of their multiplicity are nothing but the same thread pure and simple :

صد بار اگر گرہ زنی رشته یکے ست

“If you tie a hundred knots the thread is the same.”

(6) Seeing duality where only the one exists is generally mentioned as a squint in the eye. The eye with a squint is a popular metaphor among the Monists to describe the illusory nature of duality.

(7) The analogy of the wave and the ocean or the individuality as being only a bubble on the wave is one of the commonest analogies of Monism.

1. The analogy of the swiftly revolving spark which one finds in many of the mystic poets of Persia might have an Indian origin where the strict Monism of Vedanta too was illustrated with the same analogy. The Vedanta used another analogy besides this to illustrate the illusory nature of multiplicity, i.e. the One Moon high above appearing as many in the disturbed waves of the sea. Note also the following :

صورت و همی به هستی متهم داریم ما چوں حباب آئینہ بر طاق عدم داریم ما

“Our imaginary appearance has falsely incurred the blame of existence. Like a bubble our mirror is placed on the mantle-piece of non-being.”

(From *Diwān* of Mirza ‘Abdul Qādir Bedil, Niwalkishore Press, Lucknow.)

All the poetry and prose of this poet is dedicated to the idea of Monism and the unreality of phenomenal being.



گر دو کون موج بر آرند صد هزار      جمله یکے ست لیک به صد بار آمده

“If both the worlds heave into hundred thousand waves it is all One repeating itself.”

(8) An equally common metaphor is that of the light and the shadow, the phenomenal existence possessing only a negative reality, the reality of the shadow.<sup>1</sup>

اصل نزدیک و اصل دور یکے ست      ماہمہ سایہ ایم و نور یکے ست

“The reality of the far and the near are one and the same. We are all shadows, the Light is only One.”

One can say that so far as Persian mystic poetry is concerned Monism is a dominant idea in it. The poets Maghrabī and Saḥābī repeat the same theme with a thousand variations and push it to a point where neither individuality, nor personality, neither morality nor religion can find any place. The following quatrain of Saḥābī, for instance, can hardly be distinguished from atheistic and materialistic Monism :

عالم بخروش لا اله الا هو ست      غافل بگہاں کہ دشمن است او یا دوست  
دریا بہ وجود خویش موجے دارد      خس پندارد کہ این کشاکش باوست

“The universe is crying : There is no God except He and the ignorant is thinking whether He is an Enemy or a Friend. The sea is pulsating with its own waves and the straw imagines that the sea is struggling with it.”

It simply means that the universe, the ocean of unitary existence, is indifferent to the illusory values

1. Compare with this Rūmī's analogy of the phenomenal existence as the passing shadow on the earth of a bird flying high up in the air. This idea is very analogous and might have been derived from Plato's allegory of the cave where a man is fixed in a position where he can look only on the wall before his eyes on which are cast the shadows of realities behind his back. Not being able to turn round he looks only on the shadows and holds them as real. The world as a dream or as a shadowy reality is one of the commonest ideas of mysticism in every literature.

“ Words, themselves the shadows of a shadowy world ” (Tennyson).



and imaginary struggles of man.

After Sanā'ī<sup>1</sup> and Asfahānī, the greatest exponent of Monism is Farīduddīn 'Aṭṭār<sup>2</sup> whom Rūmī has bracketed with Sanā'ī as his predecessor.

عطار روح بود و سنائی دو چشم ما      ما در پس سنائی و عطار آمدم

'Aṭṭār was my soul and Sanā'ī my two eyes. I have come after Sanā'ī and 'Aṭṭār."

In another place Rūmī describes 'Aṭṭār as infinitely superior to himself as being far more travelled in the realms of Love.

هفت شهر عشق را عطار گشت      ماهیان اندر خم یک کوچه ایم

" 'Aṭṭār traversed the seven cities of Love and we have not yet gone beyond the turning of a single street."

But the work of Rūmī and the opinion of posterity have reversed the position having by consensus of opinion given him the first place among the mystics of Islam. With 'Aṭṭār, the dominating idea is Monism and the mystic correlative with it, the identity of the human and the divine soul. In his famous *Qasīda*, after enumerating a number of phenomena as being nothing but the manifestation of God Himself, he boldly says that he who does not assert his identity with God is an infidel.

هر که از وے نزد انا الحق سر      آو بود از جماعت کفار<sup>3</sup>

1. One of the greatest exponents of *wahdat al-wujūd* who died in 536 A.H., only ten years after Sanā'ī, the first great Persian Sūfī poet whose *Hadiqa* served as a model for the Mathnavī of Rūmī. The verse quoted above is from the famous Mathnavī, the *Jām-i-Jam* of Asfahānī.

2. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Farīduddīn 'Aṭṭār was born in 513 A.H. (1119-20 A.D.) at Kadkan (according to others Shadyaakh), a village near Nishapur. 'Aṭṭār is the second of the great Sūfī poets: the successor of Sanā'ī and the precursor of Jalāluddīn Rūmī. His poetical works comprise a *Dīwān* and many Mathnavīs of which the best known are the *Manṭiq al-tayr* or 'Speech of the Birds' and the *Pandnāma* or 'Book of Council.'

3. انا الحق ('I am God' or 'I am the Real' or 'I am the Truth'), said



'Attār's *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā* (Lives of the Saints), although giving the description and the teaching of others, reflects his own subjective bias towards Pantheism and Quietism.

However, to strike a compromise between Theism

to have been first uttered by Mansūr Hallāj. The utterance was the chief item on his charge sheet. Sanctified by the blood of the martyr it became the central formula of all speculative mysticism expressing in Sūfism the *Tat tvan asi* (Thou art that) and *Aham brahm asi* of Vedānta. Every great mystic after Hallāj admitted his high rank and justified his utterance. Rūmī makes repeated references to him :

چون قلم در دست غدار می رسید لا جرم منصور بر دار می رسید

"Where the Pen of authority is placed in a treacherous hand, necessarily one like Mansūr is crucified."

انا الحق has been variously rendered ; sometimes as 'I am Reality' and sometimes 'I am the Truth.' Massignon renders it as Creative Truth (*Kitāb al-Ṭawāsīn*, p. 175). Maḥmūd Shabistarī in *Gulshan-i-Rāz* gives a thoroughly pantheistic interpretation of it :

انا الحق کشف اسرار است مطلق بجز حق کیست تا گوید انا الحق

همه ذرات عالم همچو منصور تو خواهی مست گیر و خواهی مخمور

درین تسبیح و تهلیل اند دائم بدین معنی همی باشند قائم

" 'I am God ' is the absolute unveiling of the mysteries ; there is none there other than God to utter it. All atoms of the universe, you may call them tipsy or intoxicated, that is their *tasbiḥ* and *tahlil* (declaration of the Unity and Purity of God) in which they are always engaged and in the meaning of this they subsist."

|                                  |                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| چرا نبود روا از نیک بختی         | روا باشد انا الحق از درختی     |
| یقین داند که هستی جز یکی نیست    | هر آنکس را که اندر دل شکی نیست |
| در آن حضرت من وما و توئی نیست    | جناب حضرت حق را دوئی نیست      |
| که در وحدت نه باشد هیچ تمیز      | من وما و تو و او هست یک چیز    |
| یکی گردد سلوک و سیر و سالک       | شود با وجه باقی غیر هالک       |
| ولی وحدت همه از سیر خیزد         | حلول و اتحاد از غیر خیزد       |
| که در وحدت دوئی عین ضلال است     | حلول و اتحاد آنجا محال است     |
| نه هر چه آن می نماید عین بود است | وجود خلق و کثرت در نمود است    |

"When a tree can be allowed to say, 'I am God,' why cannot a good soul utter it? He in whose heart there is no doubt knows it for certain that Reality is only one. In the presence of God there is no Duality ; there I, we and thou do not exist. I, we, thou, he are all one, because in Unity there are no distinctions. Only the Being of God is eternal ; all else perishes. The way, the wayfarer and the journey all become one."



that views creation as existing outside God, and utter Pantheism that identifies everything with God, the Sūfīs developed another doctrine with the help of the Greek conception of being and non-being, attaching a kind of negative reality to the latter. So we have pure Being and Being mixed with non-being. This was nothing but Matter and Form of Aristotle or the Idea of Plato that is real Being impressing itself upon or realising itself through matter, which is nothing but utter passivity or a possibility of the receptivity of form. Unallied with any form it is non-being. So all that we call the universe is a mixture of being and non-being. Truth and Goodness and Beauty are the attributes of Being, which exist in their perfection only in the Pure Being, but in the world they are mixed with their opposites that have only a negative existence. This Greek conception was taken up by Sūfism in order to escape the charge of Pantheism, without giving up their basic formula that real Being is only one and belongs to God only. The rank of things in the scale of life is proportionate to their participation in real Being and their imperfections are due to the element of non-Being. This hypothesis termed *wahdat al-shuhūd* (the Unity of Manifestation)<sup>1</sup> was opposed to *wahdat al-wujūd* (the

1. It is so called because of the view that the things, though they exist, are overwhelmed and reduced to nothingness by the Manifestation of God. Sa'dī, who was a mystic of a very sober type, gives us his views about the nature of the ultimate Being and the position of the contingent being in relation to it, in the following verses in *Bustān* as an illustration of *wahdat al-shuhūd*:

|                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| تو آن گفتن این باحقائق شناس | ولے خرده گیرند اهل قیاس   |
| که پس آسمان و زمین چيستند   | بنی آدم و دام و دد کيستند |
| پسندیده پرسیدی اے هوشمند    | بگویم گر آید جوابت پسند   |
| که هامون و دریا و کوه و فلک | پری آدمی زاده دیو و ملک   |
| همه هرچه هستند زان کمتر اند | که با هستیش نام هستی برند |

These verses are followed by the story of a glow-worm who was asked as to why he did not come out in the day. The worm replied, "I am there day and night, but in the daytime the light of the sun makes me invisible."



Unity of Being) which accepted in its entirety cuts at the root of all morality and positive religion and justifies the witty remark of William James that Monism is a moral holiday.

The typical representatives of higher Sūfism with few dubious exceptions stick to this hypothesis of Being. It was an extremely convenient doctrine. It granted a kind of imperfect reality outside God and cut the knot of the problem of Evil.<sup>1</sup> Evil has no positive reality; God did not create it and is not responsible for it. It has only negative reality; darkness is nothing but the absence of light.

The first great mystic in Islam who is considered pantheistic is Ibn al-'Arabī.<sup>2</sup> But he too made so many compromises with positive religion that the controversy of centuries has not been able to pronounce a judgment upon him. This difficulty is experienced not only with respect to Ibn al-'Arabī but is felt about every great Sūfī when we try to get at his view of God. That real Being belongs to God only and only He really exists; if this doctrine is identical with Pantheism, then there is no mistake in pronouncing Sūfism in general as pantheistic. But the matter is not so simple. When we see the Sūfī engaged in intimate conversation with a personal God, we have to stop and think.

It is not surely God dealing with Himself even though the Sūfī would tell you it was so.<sup>3</sup> When he wants to get rid of his limited individuality and let

1. Jāmī, *Law'āih* (Lahore edn.), p. 24.

هرجا که وجود کرده سیراست اے دل      می دان بیقین که محض خیر است اے دل  
هر شر ز عدم بود عدم غیر وجود      پس شر همه مقتضای غیر است اے دل

That evil has only a negative existence was the teaching of Plotin. Augustine repeated it and afterwards in Islam it became an integral part of Sūfī Metaphysics.

God was identified with pure existence and existence was identified with Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Evil in every form is privation and absence of Being.

2. For Ibn al-'Arabī, see Nicholson's Introduction to *Tarjumān al-Ashwāq* and his notes on *Faṣūṣ* in his *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*.

3. Persian mystical poetry is replete with such dilemmic utterances



God live in him, some sort of Dualism is still there, though the nature of it is unintelligible and unspeakable.' By dying to Himself he lives in God ; it is not simply God living by Himself. The language of the Sūfī should not deceive us when he calls himself a Nothing of Nothing or when finding simple Annihilation (*fanā*) not sufficient he calls his loss of individuality as *fanā al-fanā* (the Annihilation of Annihilation). *Baqā* (Survival or Abiding Life) always follows this death unto himself. So we must repeat that it is not Pantheism but Panentheism. More light will be thrown on this subject if we examine the doctrine of impersonal immortality which is one of the most original products of Sūfism.

One must never forget that Sūfism is a phenomenon of intense religious consciousness and in its essentials is not a product of logic. It was only an attempt on the part of some Sūfīs to interpret their feeling of union with the divine into the language of logic that gave it the form of Pantheism. When we examine closely the essential characteristics of Sūfī consciousness, we come to realise how fundamentally it differs from all forms of logical or cosmical Monism. Plato, for instance, who is commonly considered to be the father of Mysticism, stands poles apart from that of spiritual Mysticism developed in the East as well as in the West, which, though agreeing with Plato that the world of senses is illusory, differs from him fundamentally in denying to accept Reason as the Ultimate Reality. For Plato too Reality is only one, but it is Reason ; so we can say that Plato's Monism or Pantheism is nothing but Panlogism ; it is intellectual

where, in spite of all the appearances of the personal connection between him and his God, the mystic at the end asserts that it was only God talking with himself. Take the following as a specimen from Auḡadī Kirmānī :

|  |  |
|--|--|
| وَأَنْ نَّكْتَهَ كِهَ اَیْنِ چَنِیْنِ نَكُو كُفْتِ | چُونِ مَن نَه بِلَمِ بَدَاں كِهَ اَوُ كُفْتِ |
| خُود كُفْتِ حَقِیْقَتِ وَ خُود شَنِیْدِ            | وَأَنْ رَوُئُ كِهَ خُود نَمُودِ خُود دِیْدِ  |
| پَس پَاشِ یَقِیْنِ كِهَ نِیْسَتِ وَاللّٰه          | مَوْجُودِ حَقِیْقِی سُوئُ اللّٰه             |



and not religious. The identity of God and matter, the conception with which philosophy started in Greece and which reasserted itself among the early Stoics, whose world-God was energy and stuff, fire and vapour, and there was nothing in the world which in its origin was not either this or that, this conception may legitimately be called Pantheism, but has absolutely nothing to do with the Pantheism of the mystic. Even the enthusiasm of a Giordano Bruno for the Life of the Universe and his passionate love of living nature may be called pantheistic, but has very little in common with the aim and object of the mystic. In such a conception, in the Universal Soul of the Cosmos no special importance attaches to the individual soul of man. Spinoza, the greatest philosopher of Monism in the West, too, is generally described as a pantheist, and in his *amor dei intellectualis* one sees the passion of the mystic in him. But when we see that his God is only a mathematical skeleton of the universe and what he loves is the Universality, Uniformity and Unchangeability of the principles of mathematical logic, we see the gulf that divides his view of Reality from that of Meister Eckhart or Rūmī.

When the Ṣūfī says that the Ultimate Reality is not only ultrasensuous but also ultrarational and with the assertion that God is everything, he joins that He is Nothing, and Nothing of Nothing, He is everywhere and yet nowhere, He is rational yet beyond reason, from Him all forms emerge but He is formless, He is the nearest to us and yet so remote that a whole life of seeking and sacrifice is required to approach Him, and that no objective reality can contain Him, and He is at home only in the essence of the soul of man and the only realities are the divine and the human soul, the universe, whose identification with God leads to Pantheism, sinks into nothingness. So we see that the logical and the cosmical forms of Pantheism can be identified with the mystic form of it only through confusion of ideas.



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